



Gracious Street Methodist Church Health and Safety Policy

Address: Methodist Church Centre on Gracious St, Chapel Street, Knaresborough, HG5 8AN

Date: 5th May 2015

Review Date: 4th May 2016

It is part of the culture of the Methodist Church and in line with our core doctrine to be concerned about the health safety and wellbeing of all those who come onto our premises. Churches are not exempt from health and safety legislation. Local Authority Environmental Health Officers are specifically charged with enforcing health and safety legislation in churches.

The Health and Safety Executive have advised that it is good practice for volunteers to be provided with the same level of health and safety training and protection as if they were employees. This means that churches should follow exactly the same regulations to ensure the health and safety of volunteers and other persons using the church as if they were employees.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

The policy is in three sections:

Section A: General statement of policy;

Section B: Organisation and responsibilities;

Section C: Arrangements.

To all employees, voluntary helpers and contractors: The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is, therefore, important that you read this document carefully and understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety.

SECTION A: GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Our policy, so far as is 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 is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church, church grounds 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 and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed regularly and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on health and safety will be on the agenda for at least one meeting annually of the Church Council, and on the Agenda of the Management Team. Employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

SECTION B: ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility of the Church Council:

The Church Council has overall responsibility for health and safety. They will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. The Church Council will also ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

Responsibility of Property Steward & Management Team:

Those persons appointed to this role and onto the Management Team carry the responsibility for the day-today implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy.

The responsibility of the person(s) appointed shall be to:

1. be familiar with health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises;
2. be familiar with the health and safety 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. ensure the church and ancillary premises are clean and tidy;
5. ensure the church grounds are properly maintained
6. ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required;
7. ensure that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training;
8. ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained;
9. ensure adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained;
10. ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

All employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and safety 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 appropriate person(s);
4. report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible;
5. not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

RESPONSIBLE PERSONS:

POLICY AREA	NAME/POSITION	TEL
Accident Book/Accident Reporting	Mrs. Eleanor Borkett	01423 862345
Fire extinguishers (2.1), Fire Alarm System, Fire protection equipment etc.	Mr. Harry Murray	01423 863188
Portable electrical appliances (3.1)	Mrs Eleanor Borkett	01423 862345
Fixed electrical system (3.4)	Mrs Eleanor Borkett	01423 862345
Working at high levels (9)	Mrs. Eleanor Borkett	01423 862345
Food preparation (10) Food Hygiene Certificates	Mrs. Pauline Murray	01423 863188
Manual handling (11)	Mr Bill Rodham	01423 865846
Condition of Buildings and Grounds	Mrs Eleanor Borkett (Supported by the maintenance Task Force)	01423 862345
Contractors	Mrs Eleanor Borkett	01423 862345
Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults	Mrs Dorothy Rodham	01423 865846

SECTION C: ARRANGEMENTS (IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY)

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

1. ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

First Aid boxes are located in:- The kitchen , The Bridge Coffee Bar and the Forest Room

We do not have a nominated first aider at present as our policy is to contact the emergency services as necessary. The post code of the Bridge entrance and the Front of Church entrance are provided on the notice boards in each vestibule. The following people have attended a first aid awareness course run by the Red Cross:

Mrs Dorothy Rodham
Mrs Eleanor Borkett
Mrs Joyce Hoare

The accident book is located in the book case outside the Minister's office in the Bridge

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book and our insurers advised if thought necessary. Accident books and accident records are regularly reviewed. These accidents will be reported by the responsible person(s).

We also have a significant incident book to record any events which should be brought to the attention of the Minister or Leadership Team.

2. FIRE SAFETY

See Separate Risk Assessment and Report

3. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

All our portable electrical equipment is tested by a competent person as required. There is a book for recording matters requiring maintenance located in the light switch cupboard in the the front vestibule.

Every five years our fixed electrical installations will be inspected and tested.

All voluntary workers and leaders must observe the following:

- I. visually check all electrical equipment before use;
- II. report all faults immediately to the responsible person(s);
- III. do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
- IV. no electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered in the electrical equipment record;
- V. electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods;
- VI. 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 boilers and any other gas equipment is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately;

5. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES:

Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances by substituting them for non-harmful alternatives. Where this is not possible, our safety arrangements are as follows:

For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment', product information provided by the manufacturers is used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, and action to take in the event of an accident.

Chemicals should not be mixed.

Chemicals should not be stored in unmarked containers.

All such substances should be kept in the locked cleaners cupboard and only used by those who need to i.e. cleaning team (metal polish) and property team members and put back after use.

6. SAFETY ISSUES PLANT AND MACHINERY i.e. ladders, strimmers, chainsaws etc.

- I. All persons on church premises and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use;
- II. Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made;
- III. After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used;
- IV. Before using any item of plant or machinery, a check must be made to ensure it is in a safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects;
- V. The appropriate personal protective equipment as directed by equipment guidelines must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery;
- VI. Persons under the age of 18 may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery;
- VII. Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person(s);
- VIII. All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and discarded if found to worn or faulty.
- IX. Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication i.e. mobile phone and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on;
- X. Items of plant and equipment kept and use by the church will be subject to checks in accordance with the PAT testing procedure etc.

7. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS – CONDITION OF FLOORS, STEPS AND PATHS.

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every quarter by the task force of:

- I. All floors and stairs in the church and hall;
- II. All paths and steps in the church grounds. Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths.

Any defects will be noted by them and they will inform the property secretary who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out if under the management team financial authority or reported to the church council.

8. LIGHTING

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every quarter by the task force to ensure that all lights in the church, hall and church grounds are working. Any bulbs that require replacing will be noted and the bulbs replaced following appropriate safety procedures.

9. WORKING AT HIGH LEVELS

Work at high levels will generally be carried out by suitably qualified contractors using the appropriate access equipment such as scaffolding or access towers. Some low risk activities may be carried out from ladders providing they are properly secured and a second person is on hand to assist.

10. PREPARATION OF FOOD

Preparation and storage of food is carried out in accordance with the food Hygiene Regulations. We currently have a 5 star food hygiene rating. The responsible person named in section 3 maintains a record of those who have been suitably trained in food hygiene.

11. MANUAL HANDLING – LIFTING, CARRYING AND MOVING LOADS

- I. Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable;
- II. 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.

12. BUILDING HAZARDS (INCLUDING GLAZING)

Our policy is to ensure that our buildings are safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this, the buildings are inspected periodically by the responsible person(s);

- I. Any defects noted are immediately reported to and the procedures put in hand for repairs;
- II. Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out;
- III. A check has been made for asbestos in the building by a competent person 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;
- IV. 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 safety material or is protected against breakage.

13. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

The church has a current safeguarding Policy, please see separate document for details.

14. PERSONAL SAFETY

A safe system of work is in place for persons working alone in the church.

15. RISK ASSESSMENTS/ACTIVITIES

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

16. CONTRACTORS

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- I. have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same;
- II. comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation;
- III. where plant and 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;
- IV. contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors;
- V. all contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. This 'permit to work' will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.