

# Health and Safety Policy

<b>This is the statement of general policy and arrangements for:</b>	<b>Plymstock United Church</b>
<b>Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of:</b>	<i>The Elders Meeting</i>
<b>Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to:</b>	<i>Richard Fisher Kate Thorn</i>

## Introduction

The Eldership of this church is committed, so far as is reasonably practicable, to providing a safe and healthy environment and conditions for its staff and volunteers, church members, all involved in its activities and all who use its premises. This policy outlines how this can be achieved and incorporates the requirements of the:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (and the regulations made under it.)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Food Safety Act 1990, and EU food hygiene law (as interpreted by the Food Standards Agency).

However, the policy goes beyond statutory requirements in some areas, as a matter of good practice and care for all people involved in church life (e.g. provision of basic first-aid provision during church activities.)

The policy will of course be most effective if all church staff and volunteers, other church members, and those who participate in church activities or use its premises, do the following:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do or not do
- Cooperate with the church on health and safety
- Correctly use work items provided by the church (including personal protective equipment) in accordance with training and instructions
- Not interfere with or misuse anything provided for health, safety or welfare.

This policy and procedures should be interpreted in the light of detailed advice and guidance from sources such as:

- the PLATO Property Handbook, produced by the United Reformed Church's network of Property, Legal and Trust Officer's, available at <http://www.urc.org.uk/plato-property-handbook1.html>
- the United Reformed Church's good practice guidance for safeguarding, available at <http://www.urc.org.uk/ministry/safeguarding-children.html>
- Congregational & General's Safer Places of Worship website, <http://www.spow.co.uk/start.php>
- Ecclesiastical Insurance Church health and safety policy with guidance notes, <https://www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmatters/churchguidance/churchhealthandsafety/index.aspx>
- Health & Safety Executive, <http://www.hse.gov.uk>

# **1. To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health and provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from church activities.**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher*

## **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments will be completed for the church premises and church activities. Actions arising out of those assessments will be implemented. Risk assessments will be reviewed at least every year, or sooner if changes are made to church premises or church activities.

They will include:

- A general risk assessment completed by the church health & safety officer
- Specific risk assessments completed by employees and volunteers for the groups / activities and events which they organise. These risk assessments will take account of children's changing needs as they grow and develop, and will be mindful of needs resulting from physical and learning disabilities and factors that may make some children and adults more vulnerable than others.
- Specific risk assessments completed for each off-site activity. If transport is organised by the church, then the risk assessment will include travel arrangements and measures will be taken to ensure: qualified and safe drivers; roadworthy vehicles' suitable insurance cover; and use of seat belts or appropriate car seats or booster cushions.

Group / activity leaders should carry out a quick visual inspection of the area being used for their meeting / event / activity before starting, note any concerns, take whatever immediate action is possible to reduce the risk of harm, and report any concerns to the health & safety officer as soon as possible after the event.

## **Electrical issues**

Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill. All employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:

- Visually check all electrical equipment before use.
- Report all faults immediately to the responsible person.
- Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment
- Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods.
- Electrical equipment which is brought onto the premises and used should be tested by the approved person and entered in the electrical equipment record.
- Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

## **Manual handling**

We will eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable. 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. The necessary training will be given to all employees and volunteers who are required to undertake manual handling as part of their church work.

## **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:

- Provide a copy of their own health and safety policy (where required by law)
- Provide evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place.
- 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
- Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with permission from the church. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.
- All contractors will be given instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work, the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake, and any safety precautions they must take.

## **2. To provide adequate information and training to ensure employees and volunteers are competent to do their work**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher*

Staff and volunteers will be given necessary health and safety induction and provided with appropriate training.

Other building users (e.g. organisations letting the church premises) will be given necessary health & safety information, including a copy of this policy and a risk assessment for the premises.

## **3. To engage and consult with employees and volunteers on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and supervision on occupational health**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher*

Staff and volunteers will be routinely consulted on health and safety matters as they arise and formally consulted for annual health and safety review meetings (or sooner if required.)

#### **4. To implement emergency procedures - evacuation in case of fire or other significant incident - to fulfil the obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.**

See Plymstock United Church Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedure

#### **5. To maintain safe and healthy working conditions, provide and maintain plant, equipment and machinery, and ensure safe storage / use of substances**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher / Kate Thorn*

##### **Basic provision for employees and volunteers**

Adequate heating and lighting, toilets, washing facilities and drinking water will be provided for the use of employees and volunteers.

##### **Regular inspection and maintenance of premises**

Quarterly inspections of premises and grounds, to include:

- general cleanliness and tidiness (as a build-up of debris is a fire risk)
- adequacy and proper functioning of lighting, heating and ventilation (especially checking that light bulbs working well in areas where there is no natural light)
- ease of access and movement (particularly checking that doors and corridors are free from obstruction, especially any emergency exits and evacuation routes)
- general fabric of building.

Any defects noted are immediately reported to the designated person and the procedures put in hand for repairs. Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to minimise the risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

##### **Regular inspection, testing and maintenance of equipment and machinery**

A list should be kept of any equipment or machinery with date and outcome of last inspection. Regular inspection, testing and maintenance of any equipment or machinery (e.g. ladders, scaffolding towers, mowers & other garden equipment, electrical equipment and sockets, heating and cooking appliances, children's play equipment, etc). Prompt action should be taken to address any defects.

The Inspection, testing and maintenance regime should specifically include:

- an annual check of any gas boiler and any other gas equipment is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register.
- an annual check of any oil fired appliance by an OFTEC registered engineer
- an annual test of any portable electrical equipment (PAT test) by a competent person
- a five-yearly inspection and test of the fixed electrical system by a competent contractor (who is NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT certified).

Any necessary work required for safety will be implemented immediately.

## **Storage and use of hazardous substances**

- Where possible, the storage and use of hazardous substances will be avoided.
- A list of all hazardous substances used on the church premises will be kept, including all substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment'.
- For each hazardous substance the following will be recorded: name of substance, hazard type, safe method of storage, protective clothing required, and procedure in the event of an accident. (n.b. Data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers are 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 stored in unmarked containers and should not be mixed.
- All hiring groups are not to bring and hazardous substances onto the church site without permission.

For more details, see [www.coshh-essentials.org.uk](http://www.coshh-essentials.org.uk)

## **6. Food hygiene regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs will be followed.**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Kate Thorn*

### **Registration**

The church is registered with the Local Authority as part of the requirements to run Café Vision.

### **Training**

We will ensure that all food handlers have received adequate instruction and training (e.g. the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate) and are aware of good practice in food preparation, handling, storage, and disposal of waste.

### **Risk assessment**

We will ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures. Extra care will be taken when preparing and serving food for under fives, expectant mums, people with serious medical conditions and the elderly.

### **Hygiene**

Workers will follow good personal hygiene (e.g. hand-washing and hair-tying) and all surfaces coming into contact with food during preparation will be clean before use.

### **Outside organisations**

We will ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

## **7. Basic first-aid provision will be available during church events activities whenever this is reasonably possible**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Mike Woodward*

### **Designated first-aiders**

A team of designated first-aiders will be maintained, who will be trained in administering basic first-aid. A list of designated first-aiders will be kept up to date with expiry date for current training.

### **First aid kits**

First-aid kits will be kept on the premises in easily accessible and well-signed locations:

*First Aid kits are located:  
In the lobby counter  
In the kitchen  
In the Upper Room*

Use of first-aid equipment will be reported to the responsible person after use and contents replenished as soon as possible to keep it fully stocked.

### **Reporting accidents**

Church staff and volunteers, and leaders of other organisations using the church premises, will be instructed to report accidents so that they may be recorded in the accident book / accident record sheets on an accident form and record of accidents will be regularly reviewed. The accident book / accident record sheets are located: Church pigeon holes. Completed forms to be posted in the white letter box next to the counter. Church Health and Safety Officer to check these and file in the church office on a regular basis.

## **8. Serious accidents and ill health at work are reported under RIDDOR regulations**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher/ Kate Thorn*

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations will be followed. Fatal accidents, major injuries and injuries which involve the injured person being absent from work for more than seven days must be reported to the enforcing authorities. So must diseases and certain dangerous occurrences, as defined by the regulations. These can be reported online at [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor) and records kept by the church.

There are three requirements for reporting, as follows:

- serious injuries or dangerous occurrences (as defined by the regulations) must be reported immediately. This must be followed by a report in writing within ten days on official form F2508.
- accidents involving the injured person losing more than seven consecutive days work (excluding the day of the accident but including any days which would not have been working days) but which do not fall into the above category, must be reported in writing within fifteen days on form F2508.

- reportable diseases must be reported in writing on form F2508A. (This will be required only if the employer receives a written diagnosis of the disease made by a doctor and the person concerned is involved with a work activity as specified in the regulations. (Reportable diseases are defined by regulations but include certain poisonings, infections such as legionellosis and hepatitis, and other conditions such as certain musculo-skeletal disorders.)

See [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor) for further details about these regulations including detailed definitions of what must be reported.

## 9. Health and safety law poster is displayed

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher*

Health and Safety law poster is displayed on the Community Notice Board in the Norley lounge

## 10. Example duties of Church Health & Safety Officer

### **Monthly:**

*Complete using the relevant forms:*

Emergency exits, fire doors and electric closing devices

Fire alarms (visual and test buttons)

Emergency lighting (visual and test button)

Fire extinguishers (Visual)

P.A.T. (visual)

First aid boxes

### **Six monthly**

Emergency lighting extended battery test (15mins)

Fire Alarm smoke test

### **Annual**

PAT testing

Fire extinguisher service

Gas boiler service

Platform lift service

Emergency lighting extended battery test (1 hour)

Update first aiders list

Check and update evacuation plan

Review Risk assessments:

Building fire risk

All Church group activities

Legionella

Kitchen and food preparation

### **5 years**

Check quinquennial survey for any H & S issues

Arrange electrical wiring test and certificate

Church

Norley

Manse

## **11. Review and monitoring of this policy**

**Name of responsible person(s):** *Richard Fisher*

This policy will be reviewed, monitored and revised every 12 months (or sooner if church activities change significantly) and will be approved by the Elders Meeting and adopted by the Church Meeting annually

Signed:  
(Church health & safety officer)

Date: