

Ascension Church, Haywards Heath
Freely you have received, freely give. Matt 10:8

Health & Safety Policy

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 and others who may use the church, or any other area we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) 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 PCC 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 We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.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 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 his or her part in its implementation.

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

Organisation and responsibilities

1. The members of the PCC with joint overall responsibility for implementing our policy are the Churchwardens.

They will ensure that:

- 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 as soon as possible;
- 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; and
- Set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

2. The Churchwardens 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; and
- They set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

3. 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.

They will ensure that they will:

- 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 employees or volunteers of known hazards;
- Attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely;
- Not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so;
- Report any accident; and
- 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.

Competent Assistance

Where necessary, we will appoint someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations.

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 provide 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 employees and volunteers.

Our first aid box is located in: the right hand vestry at the front of the church

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is: Rev. Martin Jones

Accident Reporting

We 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 right hand vestry with the first aid box.

Monitoring

We 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 left hand vestry within the filing cabinet

Specific Arrangements**Asbestos**

Asbestos present in the original church building has been safely removed and there is no asbestos present in the Ascension Church.

Church Buildings

We 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. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing.

Churchyard

We ensure that fences and gates are kept in good repair. The boundary hedge will be cut in accordance with guidance on nesting birds.

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 arise under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and comply with these if necessary.

Display Screen Equipment

Where our employees and volunteers, for the purposes of their work for us, regularly use their own computers daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more, we will ask them to analyse

workstations to identify precautions, implementing these as necessary. We will also provide information, training, eye/eyesight tests (on request) and special spectacles if needed.

Electricity

We ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliance 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 have completed a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and take in the event of a fire. Our findings are recorded, and we have implemented any necessary precautions. We review and revise these annually and whenever we suspect that they are no longer valid.

Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural 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.

Heating Systems

We ensure that our 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.

Lifting Equipment

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

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.

Preparation of Food

We ensure that on those occasions when we prepare food, 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.

Slips and Trips

We implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled 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 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.

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.

Working Alone

We identify circumstances where our employees and volunteers work alone, and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety.

Working at Height

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. We will make sure

that these are implemented, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used.

Reviewed & Reapproved 16th June 2026