

St John the Baptist Flitton

Health and Safety Policy

It is the policy of the PCC of St John the Baptist, Flitton to protect all persons including employees, volunteers, contractors and members of the public from potential injury and damage to their health which might arise when in or near the church.

The PCC will provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions, equipment and systems of work for all employees and volunteers and provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

The PCC will give a high level of commitment to health and safety and will comply with all statutory requirements.

Overall responsibility for the health and safety policy lies with the Incumbent. The Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council have general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

All voluntary helpers 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.

Voluntary helpers 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
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

Implementation of the Policy

In the surrounds to the church buildings

Access around and about the church building will be well maintained, with handrails and steps where appropriate. Some lighting is provided and measures necessary to control hazardous conditions where possible:

- The path will be cleaned at least yearly to remove build-up of algae, particularly under the yew tree
- When there are snowy or icy conditions, snow will be cleared and salt/grit will be used prior to services when volunteers are available.
- If the path remains slippery, a warning notice will be placed at each end of the path.

The contractor undertaking maintenance of the churchyard will be expected to conduct an appropriate risk assessment prior to carrying out any tasks, and will advise the PCC if any special safety measures are required. In particular, he will:

- Use the required protective equipment
- Only use equipment for which he has received appropriate training
- Always use an RCD when operating electrical equipment.

Within the church buildings

The church buildings will be adequately lit. A torch will be made available close to the main entrance in the nave for emergencies.

The church building will be free of tripping hazards eg. trailing cables, uneven floor coverings.

The floor surfaces should not be slippery so as to cause a hazard to people who use the church building.

Ladders and stepladders left in the church will be in a sound condition. Any defects will be notified to the health and safety advisor or Churchwarden. They should be adequately secured before use. No one should use any ladder, stepladder, or climb any steps in the church when alone in the building.

A visual check of the electrical system should indicate no defects. If any defects are suspected, they should be reported to a churchwarden or the PCC Health and Safety representative as quickly as possible.

The fixed wiring installation will be inspected by a qualified electrical contractor every 5 years. All portable electrical appliances will have appropriate checks by a qualified electrician every 3 years. Any potential defects with electrical appliances will be reported to a churchwarden or the PCC Health and Safety representative, and will not be used until deemed safe.

The heating systems will be safe and capable of maintaining a reasonable temperature within the church buildings. Gas heaters will be maintained by a CORGI registered contractor.

Special care will be taken for candlelit and Christingle services; The guidance provided by the Children's Society will be followed.

Access to the roof of the church is restricted to professionals (builders, architect) with a legitimate reason to be there. The PCC will ensure that contractors use a *safe system of work*.

In the tower

The threshold into the bell tower is a potential trip hazard and warnings will be placed nearby.

Access to the upper floors of the bell tower and roof is limited to those with a *bona fide* reason to be there. At all other times the door to the stairs will be kept locked. A separate risk assessment is available for using the bell tower stairs.

Safety notices warning of the dangers of touching the bell ropes will be prominently displayed in the ringing chamber.

Normally bells should be left in the *down* position. The state of the bells should be indicated if they are left *up* or *set*.

Appropriate warnings must be made, such as a very conspicuous notice, when people are in the belfry. It would be advisable to incorporate a permit to work system which would manage this situation.

The tower clock will be regularly maintained and the clock weight will be adequately guarded.

Other matters

Chalices will be wiped with an antibacterial cloth after each use. They should periodically be washed in hot water, with washing up liquid and a fresh cloth, and then stored in a clean environment.

Only domestic chemical substances will be in use on the premises, for example cleaning detergents, polishes etc.

There is a First Aid box located in the bell tower.

A record of all accidents and near misses which occur on the premises will be kept and, where necessary, will be reported to the local Environmental Health Department.

Risk assessments

There are specific risk assessments for:

- Fire
- Accessing the upper floors of the bell tower and the roof
- Serving refreshments in Church, including using the urn or a kettle, and children's activities
- Cleaning the church and Mausoleum
- Holding a regular service in church
- The use of hand-held candles by the congregation

Policy reviewed: 8th September 2021