**Risk Assessment**: Flitton Church **Activity**  Giving lit candles to the congregation

**Date assessed** 30th May 2018  **Name of Assessor** Clare Butler Ellis

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| What are the hazards? | Who might be harmed and how? | What should you do | What further action is necessary? | Action by who? | Action by when? | Done |
| Dripping hot wax | All | Providing wax guards can help prevent burning from dripping wax but ones made from paper should be kept well below the flame.  Be vigilant during the service and watch out for the other people’s guards getting too close to the flame. |  | All PCC present and person leading the service | During service |  |
| Children with candles | Anyone or anything in the vicinity, including the child | Do not give lit candles to young children. Let parents be the judge of whether they are old enough.  Make sure there is always a responsible adult with anyone under 16 having a candle |  | Whoever has the responsibility of handing out candles | During service |  |
| Those less mobile – e.g. the elderly – trying to move with a lit candle | Themselves and others | Probably not wise to have those who are a bit unsteady on their feet to walk whilst holding a candle.  If some are processing with candles, invite those who might not find this easy to remain in their pews. |  | Person leading the service | During the service |  |
| Fire risk assessment |  | Be very familiar with the fire risk assessment and the procedure for evacuating the church, the location of fire extinguishers and fire blankets  Fire blankets are the most appropriate for a small fire or for clothing  Make sure the chancel door is unlocked |  | Person leading the service, PCC and all helpers | Prior to the service |  |
| Setting fire to other materials being held; setting fire to clothing or hair, or burning another nearby person; dropping candle and burning/setting fire to floor/pew/carpet/person | Lighting candles for a large number of people can be chaotic with people reaching across each other | Have a plan for lighting the candles and communicate it to the congregation when you start. Try to ensure that people do not need to move in and out of pews to get candles lit – it may be better to pass a flame from person to person with everyone stationary |  | Person leading the service | Prior to service |  |
| Trying to juggle hymn books or service sheets – particularly if needing to turn pages – presents a risk of setting them on fire | Ideally, members of the congregation should not be required to hold anything else whilst holding a lit candle  Consider the structure of the service – try to ensure that if there have to be hymns or prayers etc while the congregation holds lit candles, these are well known so that the need to use books or sheets is minimised. The congregation must be given an opportunity to find the correct page in the book or sheet before candles are lit.  Projecting the words onto a screen might be a safer option. |  | Person leading the service | Prior to the service |  |
| Getting too close to a candle while processing or moving | If a procession around the church is to be organised, then there must be sufficient space between people to ensure they don’t bump into candles.  It is not known what is the maximum number of people that can process around the church safely with lit candles, so this will have to be judged on the day. ( It is unlikely that a typical Flitton congregation would be too many but it may be exceeded in a UB service) |  | Person leading the service | Prior to the service |  |
| Tripping, dropping the candle, losing concentration whilst walking or holding it | Do not ask people to do too much multi-tasking with lit candles. Given the uneven floor at Flitton, attention has to be paid to this so do not have a procession with lit candles at the same time as singing or reading unless this is from memory. Ensure that the service structure does not entail too much complication whilst lit candles are held. |  | Person leading the service | Prior to the service |  |
| All risks from candles | Read out some simple instructions to the congregation prior to handing out candles (e.g. at the start of the service). This should include – procedure in the event of a fire; keep long hair out of the way of flames (tie back if possible); fire exits . Suggest if anything catches fire or starts to burn, throw it onto the floor of the aisle and someone will grab a fire blanket to smother it. |  | Person leading the service | At the start of the service or just before candles are distributed |  |