



**Abbey Hill United Reformed Church
Kenilworth CV8 1LW**

Health and Safety Policy

This document is the Health and Safety Policy for Abbey Hill United Reformed Church, Kenilworth. Registered address as above.

Responsible person – Elders and Managers

Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Abbey Hill United Reformed Church is compliant with our duty under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. This includes the following important aspects:

- As a church we understand that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church and halls.
- We also know that, where we are an employer or control premises in certain circumstances, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety law.

Who this policy applies to:

This policy applies to:

- all members of our church
- all those who attend and serve our church/place of worship and its services
- organisations and groups which hire or use our building (who should have their own Health and Safety policy and risk assessments for their activities where appropriate)
- visitors
- contractors (who should also follow their own Health and Safety policies and risk assessments as per relevant trade safety guidance / legislation and have appropriate liability insurance)

Items covered by policy:

- **General Statement of Policy**
- **General Arrangements**
 - Competent Assistance
 - Fire Safety
 - First Aid and Accidents (& RIDDOR)

- Information and Training
- Risk Assessment
- **Specific Arrangements**
 - Asbestos
 - Church Buildings
 - Construction Work
 - Contractors
 - Electricity
 - Events
 - Gas Safety Equipment ○ Hazardous Substances
 - Lighting
 - Manual Handling
 - Preparation of Food
 - Safeguarding Children and Adults
 - Safety of Plant and Machinery
 - Slips, Trips and Falls
 - Vehicle Parking on Church Premises
 - Working Alone
 - Working at High Levels

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 employee, congregation, visitors and others who may use or visit the church and halls we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where applicable.

The Elders, as trustees of the local church, accept their overall responsibility for this. Any decisions we make will have due regard for it.

We will keep health and safety matters under review at Elders and Managers meetings. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy annually, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

It is the duty of everyone 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.

Date of last review: 10/07/2024

The Elders (as trustees of the local church) and Managers have overall responsibility for implementing our policy. They will ensure that:

- The standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained.
- Any accidents are recorded and reported as necessary, in line with this policy, and investigated where appropriate.
- Relevant health and safety documents and records are retained.
- Any hazards reported to them are rectified in a timely manner.
- They keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church.
- They set a personal example on matters of health and safety.
- Only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests.
- All employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger.
- 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.
- Advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy.
- Any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible.

Everyone has a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church premises. They will ensure that they:

- 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 to an Elder 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.
- Do not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so.
- Report all accidents to an Elder, and record First Aid in the First Aid report book.
- Do not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

General Arrangements

Fire Safety:

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Please see separate Fire Policy document for Trinity United Reformed Church.

First Aid and Accidents:

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including:

- Suitably stocked first aid boxes in each building and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements.
- Signs indicating where the first aid equipment is kept will be posted on the notice board.
- An accident book, which is located in each first aid box. All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book, or on an Accident Report form and our insurers advised.

- Relevant information for employees and volunteers.
- The accident book and accident records will be regularly reviewed.

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) there is a statutory requirement to report certain types of accident, dangerous occurrences and disease to the enforcing authorities. Fatal accidents, major injuries, and injuries which involve the injured person being absent from work or unable to perform their normal duties for more than seven days, must be reported to the enforcing authorities.

Accidents to members of the public or others must be reported if they result in an injury and the person is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment of that injury. Examinations and diagnostic tests do not constitute ‘treatment’ in such circumstances.

To report an accident, an appropriate online report form can be found and completed at: www.hse.gov.uk/riddor. The form will then be submitted directly to the RIDDOR database. A copy will be received for church records. There is a telephone service for reporting fatal and specified injuries only. The Incident Contact Centre is on 0345 300 9923 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm).

Information and Training:

We will provide any necessary information and training and 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.

Risk Assessment

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety legislation for all regular and ‘one-off’ church activities. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions, and review as appropriate. Hall users should also have risk assessments for their activities provided in our buildings.

Specific Arrangements

Asbestos:

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if so, assess any risk from it. We will then implement any plan to manage that risk. We will provide relevant information to others who might need it (e.g. building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

Church Buildings:

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

Contractors:

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed must:

- Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law).
- Show that they have appropriate Public and Employers' liability insurance.
- Be able to show that when plant and machinery is brought onto the church premises, it has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.
- Only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own employees with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.

Electricity:

We will ensure that:

- Any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliances are maintained to prevent danger.
- Any defective equipment is not used until it is repaired or replaced.
- We keep records of the checks made where appropriate.
- Every year all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent person.
- Any unsafe equipment is disposed of safely.
- No electrical equipment is brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the competent person.

Events:

Where we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services and fundraising events, we will ensure a risk assessment is completed and any extra precautions are in place.

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.

Hazardous Substances:

Where possible we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, our safety arrangements are as follows:

- All hazardous substances, which include substances marked as harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous to the environment will be stored in a metal cupboard.
- Data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturer will be used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, disposal and action to be taken in the event of an accident.
- Hazardous substances will not be stored in unmarked containers.

Lighting:

In order to ensure that the church and its associated buildings are adequately lit, an inspection will be made every month to ensure that all the lights are working. Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported.

Manual Handling:

Our policy is to 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 dynamic risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, such as trolleys or other precautions including team lifting.

Preparation of Food:

On those occasions when food is prepared in the church, we will ensure that:

- Food is only prepared in the kitchen areas.
- Food is stored in such a way as to avoid contamination.
- Hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste are provided.
- When we prepare food, we use a clean and disinfected work surface, utensils and equipment.
- All hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

Safeguarding Children and Adults:

Please see the separate policy regarding the Safeguarding of Children and Adults

Safety of Plant and Machinery:

The procedures for checking and rules for use are as follows:

- Persons under the age of 18 may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power-driven item.
- Ladders may only be used for work of short duration, provided they can be secured safely. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties.
- Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified another person of the details of the work being undertaken.

Slips, Trips and Falls:

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking into account any difficulty frail, elderly or disabled people 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 and 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.

Vehicle Parking on Church Premises:

Parking facilities are very limited on church premises and any vehicle parking must adhere to the following:

- Only park in marked spaces.

Working Alone:

Any person working alone should ensure that all external doors are secured, and that someone is aware that they are on the church premises.

Working at High Levels:

Where possible we will try and 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:

- Any work within the church premises that requires the use of a ladder is designated as working at a high level.
- Only approved contractors or volunteers who deem themselves competent may work at a high level.
- A second person should be in attendance when a ladder is being used.

Information and Enforcement

Health and Safety Executive information:

www.hse.gov.uk

Health and Safety Law

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law – what you need to know' is displayed on the notice board.