



The Parish of Christchurch

Christchurch Priory – St George at Jumpers – St John at Purewell

The Parochial Church Council of Christchurch

Health & Safety Statement and Policy

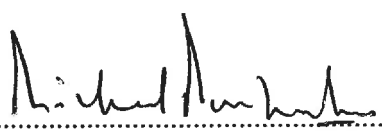
Health & Safety Policy Statement

1. General Statement

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe, and healthy working conditions, equipment, and systems of work for all our staff and volunteers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of all visitors, contractors, and members of the public who may visit the church along with its associated buildings and churchyard.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out below. The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our organisation or relevant laws and regulations. To ensure this, the policy, and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed regularly and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on health and safety will be on the agenda for all relevant meetings and staff will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Signed 

Position *Interim Vicar*

Date *6th* / *July* / *2026*

Review date *6th* / *May* / *2027*

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2. Organisation and responsibilities

The responsibility for health and safety rests with everyone, from the senior person through to each member of staff, Clergy, and volunteer. This section sets out the responsibilities under this policy. Overall responsibility for health and safety within Christchurch Priory is that of the Vicar and the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

To ensure health and safety standards are maintained and improved, the following people are responsible for ensuring that all activities under their control are carried out in accordance with the organisation's Health and Safety policy, standards, and safe working procedures, and in compliance with statutory provisions.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The PCC is responsible for ensuring:

- There is suitable finance and other resources (e.g., competent advice and guidance) available in respect of health and safety at the church.
- The care and maintenance of the Parish fabric and its contents is carried out with due regard for health and safety.
- Suitable safety management systems and procedures are in place for the activities that take place at the church.
- Establishment of the church Health and Safety Committee.
- Appropriate action is taken on reports from the church Health and Safety committee. Health and Safety will be a standing agenda item for the PCC.

The Vicar

The Vicar has overall responsibility for health and safety within the parish and together with the PCC to ensure all legal health and safety responsibilities are carried out. The Vicar will ensure:

- Health and Safety Policies are properly developed, reviewed and implemented.
- Effective co-ordination and communication throughout the church on health and safety issues
- The appointment of an employee as a Health and Safety Officer.
- The appointment of suitable employees, volunteers, and key roles such as the Head Sidesman.
- The promotion of safe working practices on church premises.

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- Serious accidents and incidents are thoroughly investigated using the workbook HSG245 available on the HSE website <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg245.htm>

Health and Safety as part of the Fabric Committee

The PCC has delegated responsibility to the Fabric Committee who have Health & Safety as a standing agenda item for overseeing health and safety in the Parish. The Committee meets monthly, and its role includes:

- Monitoring the progress of any health and safety actions plans relating to all church premises. Recommending actions following any safety inspections carried out by the Health and Safety Officer or Safety Consultants.
- Reviewing incident reports and investigations.
- Discussion and approval of health and safety policies and procedures
- Keeping a diary of important health and safety events throughout the year (e.g. fixed electrical testing dates, risk assessment reviews) and ensuring that these jobs are completed as scheduled.
- Discussing and planning any other health and safety related matters affecting the church (e.g., special events or building work).
- Reporting the main issues from the Committee meeting and any serious incidents to the PCC.
- Promoting safe working practices and safety initiatives within the parish.
- Assessing health and safety training needs on annual basis.

Health and Safety Officer

Christchurch Priory will appoint a person from among its employees to the role of Health and Safety Officer. Together the Health and Safety Officer, and the Chief Operations Officer fulfil the legal requirement under Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to have access to competent health and safety advice.

The Health and Safety Officer's role includes:

- Writing and reviewing health and safety procedures.
- Conducting and reviewing risk assessments for church premises and activities
- Offering general advice and support on health and safety issues, including requirements such as training and safety equipment.

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- Supervising contractors when they are working on site.
- Investigation of serious incidents in conjunction with the Chief Operations Officer and Vicar and prompt reporting of accidents reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 to the enforcing authority.
- Conducting periodic formal and informal health and safety inspections.
- The general safety of the Parish office and staff, including organising workstation assessments and training.
- The organisation of electrical (both portable and fixed) testing and gas safety inspection for all church property.

Chief Operations Officer

The Chief Operations Officer will ensure:

- The safe supervision of all volunteers in conjunction with the Facilities Team Members.
- The investigation of serious incidents in conjunction with the Health and Safety Officer and Vicar. Where necessary the Chief Operations Officer will make sure, accidents reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 are reported promptly to the enforcing authority

Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens

Churchwardens are responsible for ensuring maintenance and repair of all church property and goods. Working closely with the church Inspecting Architect they should report and take action on any such issues that may affect the health and safety of people visiting or working at the church. Churchwardens also play a key role in ensuring and promoting fire safety at the church.

Director of Music

The Director of Music is responsible for the:

- Identification of safety issues relating to the operation, maintenance, and repair of the church organs, Pianos, and other instruments within the Parish.
- Putting measures in place to ensure the health and safety of the church choir during practice and service

Tower Captain

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The Tower Captain is responsible for ensuring:

- Safety procedures are in place and are being followed for all bell ringing activities and access to the bell chamber.

That all bell ringers are properly instructed on safety procedures for ringing and accessing the bell chamber. This includes the safety supervision of any visiting bell ringers from other parishes.

Staff

Staff (including employees, volunteers, and the clergy) have legal duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. In particular, they must:

- co-operate with management on health and safety matters;
- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- co-operate, so far as is necessary, to enable any duty or requirement imposed on the organisation by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to be performed or complied with.
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety, or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to both disciplinary action being taken by the organisation and prosecution by the enforcing authority.

3. Arrangements

Risk assessments

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the parish has a duty to assess risks to the health and safety of anyone who may be affected by their work activities. It is parish's policy to ensure that no-one is put at risk from any activities under its control.

Risk assessments will be undertaken for situations that may present a risk to health and safety. Some of main risks:

- manual handling.
- display screen equipment.
- contact with electricity.
- pressure systems.
- lifting equipment.

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- work at height.
- asbestos.
- legionella.
- the bell tower and ringing chamber
- the churchyard
- contractors and visitors.
- lone working.

Risk assessments will be undertaken by the Health and Safety Officer taking advice from EIG (Insurance) where necessary. The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to all relevant members of staff.

Action required to remove / control risks will be approved by the Chairman of the Fabric Committee. The Health and Safety Officer will ensure action required is implemented; and will check that the implemented actions have removed the hazards or reduced the risks to an acceptable level.

Assessments will be reviewed annually or when work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

To help reduce the risk of injury or exposure, the parish will develop safe systems of work for the hazardous tasks that are undertaken. All staff should read and follow the guidance detailed in these documents.

Hazardous substances

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002, the parish has a duty to assess the risks both from hazardous substances that are used (e.g., chemicals, solvents, paints, oil, etc.) and from hazardous substances generated from work activities (e.g. dust, fume, vapour, etc.).

The Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for identifying all substances that need a COSHH assessment. The Health and Safety Officer will then be responsible for undertaking COSHH assessments.

All employees, volunteers and clergy are responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented when using hazardous substances. Assessments will be reviewed annually or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

First aid and accident reporting

The parish will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all accidents and dangerous occurrences are reported internally and, where appropriate, to the enforcing authority. In addition, all accidents and dangerous occurrences will be investigated, and reasonable measures put in place to prevent recurrence.

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All accidents, cases of work-related ill health and dangerous occurrences are to be reported to the duty Facilities Team Member. Details of the incident will be recorded in an accident book which is located in the Facilities Team Members' Vestry.

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for periodically analysing the accident book for signs of trends, ahead of the Health and Safety Committee where the reports will be discussed.

The Health and Safety Officer along with the Chief Operations Officer and Vicar is responsible for undertaking investigations following accidents, dangerous occurrences, and work-related ill health absence.

The Vicar is responsible for ensuring action is taken on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

The Chief Operations Officer and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for reporting notifiable accidents, diseases, and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority, as required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.

A first aid kit is located at the Welcomers desk, the Vestry, Priory Tea Rooms Kitchen, Song Room, Admin office and the Ringing Chamber. The parish will appoint first aiders for all churches within the parish and offices.

Names of these first aiders will be displayed in the appropriate church and Admin Office. The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that first aid boxes are regularly stocked with approved first aid material that is in date.

A defibrillator is located at the West End of the Priory. Monthly tests are the responsibility of the Duty Facilities Team Member. An additional first aid kit is located in the Admin Office.

A Defibrillator is also located at St Georges Church which is maintained by a member of the Congregation in conjunction with the Deputy Church Warden. Monthly tests and first Aid boxes will be actioned by the Facilities Manager.

Fire and emergency action

The Fabric Committee is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented and reviewed at least every two years.

The church has emergency procedures in place for the church, and its offices. These cover normal weekday operations, services, and special events.

The Facilities Manager will organise the visits of a contractor to maintain and check the fire extinguishers on an annual basis; along with an engineer to service the fire alarms on a six-monthly basis.

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The emergency evacuation procedures will be tested every 12 months. This will be the responsibility of the Facilities Manager and or Duty Facilities Team Member for the Parish and the Chief Operations Officer.

Teams from the local fire station will visit and inspect on an annual basis alongside the Health & Safety Manager who will bring any actions to the next meeting of the Health & Safety Committee unless immediate action is required.

Work equipment (including electrical safety and pressure systems)

Under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998, the church has a duty to ensure that all plant and equipment that requires maintenance (including statutory testing) is identified and that the maintenance work is undertaken.

The Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for identifying all plant and equipment needing maintenance. Maintenance programmes for plant and equipment will include the boilers, church organ, fixed electrical installation, and portable electrical appliances, along with any other relevant tools and equipment.

The Health & Safety Officer and the Facilities Manager will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up and that all identified maintenance is implemented and recorded. Any problems found with plant/equipment should be reported to the Facilities Manager / Health & Safety Officer.

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 apply to electrical installations at virtually all premises. They require precautions to be taken against the risk of death or personal injury from electricity in work activities.

Visual inspections of electrical equipment should be carried out before use. Staff should check the integrity of the plug, lead, and casing. If staff have any doubts about safety of a piece of electrical equipment they should immediately label it do not use and report this as specified above.

The Facilities Manager will be responsible for ensuring both fixed and portable electrical equipment testing is conducted by a competent person. The Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 require users of pressure plant to ensure items operate in a safe working condition and are free from serious defect.

The Facilities Manager in conjunction with the Chief Operations Officer will be responsible for ensuring the gas boiler systems are properly maintained by a competent person in line with a written scheme of examination (WSE).

Consultation with Employees

Under the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 the church has a duty to consult with staff either directly or through elected

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representatives on matters relating to health and safety. The church has no formally elected safety representatives but staff can raise concerns about health and safety with their section head or any of the people listed below. These people should then raise the issue with Health and Safety Officer who can take it to the Health and Safety Committee as necessary.

Staff representative(s) are:

- Volunteer Section Heads
- Tower Captain
- Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens
- Clergy Members
- Director of Music

Information, instruction, and supervision

The Health and Safety (Information for Employees) Regulations 1989 require the church to display a poster telling staff what they need to know about health and safety.

A copy of the HSE's Health and Safety Law poster is displayed in the Parish Admin Office, Parish Notice Board near the North Porch, and Facilities Team Members' Vestry.

Health and safety advice is available from the Health and Safety Officer, who is able to consult with EIG Insurers when necessary.

Supervision of trainees will be arranged / undertaken / monitored by their section head or respective volunteer section head.

Training and development

The law requires an employer to provide appropriate information, instruction and training regarding health and safety at work. This is to enable employees to work safely for the benefit of themselves and others.

Induction training will be provided for all employees by section heads and the Health and Safety Officer. Job specific training will be provided by Section heads together with experienced staff. No staff member should carry out a task that they are not competent to do, unless supervised by a suitably qualified person.

Training records are kept by the Chief Operations Officer in the Parish Admin Office. Training will be identified, arranged, and monitored on an annual basis by the Health and Safety Committee.

If a staff member does not understand any matter relevant to their health and safety at work, or consider that they have not received adequate information, instruction, or training, they must report the matter to their section head.

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Monitoring and reviewing

To ensure that the parish's commitment to managing health, safety, and welfare in the workplace is actively pursued the Health and Safety Committee and Health and Safety Officer will examine the implementation of this policy by performing safety audits and inspections of the premises and work activities. In addition, this policy, together with its associated arrangements, will be reviewed annually or when work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

If you are unsure about any issues raised in this policy, please inform the Chief Operations Officer or Health & Safety Manager immediately. Do not take chances. If in doubt, ask.

Contractors and visitors

The church is open to the public throughout the week. Welcomers are available in the church to welcome visitors to the building and give directions. Facilities Team Members are available throughout the year when the church is open to the public. Emergency procedures are in place for church services and events.

The parish has a duty to ensure that any third-party contractor it hires are firstly competent to carry out the work; and secondly do not endanger the health and safety of workers and visitors to the church. Major construction or restoration work will be managed by the church architect who will be responsible for carrying out suitable checks on the contractor's competence.

For smaller maintenance and repair jobs the church largely uses local contractors with whom there is a long-standing relationship. The Facilities Manager is responsible for carrying out checks on and hiring these contractors.

The Facilities Manager will be responsible for issuing any permits to work where applicable (e.g., for roof or hot work). The Facilities Manager will be responsible for supervising contractor works on site. This responsibility will fall to the Duty Facilities Team Member in the absence of the Facilities Manager.

Special Events

The parish runs a number of special events throughout the year that the public attend. These include regular Sunday services and one-off events such as church fetes and concert/musical performances.

The organiser of a special event will be responsible for conducting their own risk assessment of their event and this should be undertaken in conjunction with the Health and Safety Officer and the Parish's own risk assessments. This is to ensure that the hirer understands that they are responsible for safeguarding, supervision of any young people or vulnerable adults is in place or if any additional equipment is being brought in or licensing for specific musical items and any associated liability insurance

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which might be required. The Health and Safety Officer will ensure a risk assessment is conducted for regular church services, events, and tours.

The Chief Operations Officer will request relevant information (e.g., risk assessments) from third parties using the church for special events. Likewise, the church will supply third parties on request with relevant fire and general safety information about the church.

Food safety

The church has a duty under the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 to protect people from unsafe food practices. It is important to ensure that when food is provided it is safe to eat.

No food preparation for sale to the general public is currently permitted in the church.

The Priory Tea Rooms is currently operated by CPEL (Christchurch Priory Enterprises Ltd) who are responsible for food hygiene there. Any church personnel who use the kitchen for an event will abide by the protocols established by CPEL. The church has written guidelines in place on food being brought to church (for example for Bring and Share lunches) and any food left out for more than 4 hours will be disposed of.

Barbecues for church groups (for example the choir or friends) will follow the same principles (where possible) as contained in the protocols for The Priory Tearooms.

Asbestos

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 require an organisation to prevent the exposure of staff to asbestos. The church has conducted an asbestos survey and management plan.

This plan will be updated as necessary by the Facilities Manager and a copy held in the Vestry. Any work to be carried out on the building fabric must not begin without first consulting the asbestos register.

It is a specific requirement of the legislation that duty holders repair or remove any material that contains or is presumed to contain asbestos if the likelihood of exposure is such that health risks could result because of its location, condition, or likelihood of disturbance. The church has undertaken several projects that have involved the removal of asbestos by a licensed contractor.

Legionella

Legionella is a common bacterium that survives and multiplies in water. It is widespread in natural and fresh water including rivers, lakes, streams, and ponds. It

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may also be found in wet soil. Water temperatures in the range of 20°C to 45°C favour growth. It is uncommon to find proliferation below 20°C and it does not survive above 60°C.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2005 relate to the risks from hazardous micro-organisms, including Legionella. Under the regulations the church will conduct a risk assessment and then adopt precautions, such as inspection and monitoring of water systems, as necessary.

Work at height

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require employers, as far as is reasonably practicable, to avoid work at height. Where such work is unavoidable, employers are required to prevent falls from height and minimise the consequences of a fall from height in the event of its occurrence.

The parish will engage competent contractors to carry out many of the highest risk work at height tasks, such as changing the lighting in the nave and maintenance of the tower. Written procedures and risk assessments will be completed for all tasks to be carried out at height. Completion of these assessments is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer. For work conducted by contractors, the Facilities Manager will request copies of relevant risk assessments and safe working procedure from the contractor prior to work beginning on site.

A ladder log will be kept recording inspections of ladders kept on site.

Access to the roof and bell chamber will be controlled and supervised at all times by key workers such as the Facilities Team Member team and Tower Captain.

Lifting Equipment

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) lay down health and safety requirements for lifting equipment. The regulations place responsibilities on owners and users of lifting equipment to undertake a risk assessment of their lifting operations and put in place measures to remove or reduce risk. This will be the responsibility of the Duty Facilities Team Member and Health and Safety Officer. Any ropes and pulleys supporting equipment will be tested annually by a suitably qualified engineer.

Manual handling

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 require Injury caused by manual handling or repetitive strain is an occupational hazard. All manual work must be formally assessed and where possible mechanised or different work patterns and practices introduced to minimise the risks of injury.



The church will ensure that key manual handling tasks are properly risk assessed. These assessments will be carried out by the Health and Safety Officer. All hazardous manual handling operations are the subject of a risk assessment.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 apply to workers who "habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work". The main feature of the regulations is the duty to assess workstations and reduce the risks that arise.

Responsibility for ensuring workstation assessments are completed rests with the Chief Operations Officer. Relevant staff will be asked to self-assess their workstations to identify any health or workstation set-up issues. Advice on correct workstation set-up can be requested from the Health and Safety Officer as necessary.

Lone Working

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. They are found in a wide range of situations including people in fixed establishments where only one person works on the premises or mobile workers who operate away from their fixed base.

Although there is no legal prohibition on working alone, the broad duties of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 still apply. These require identifying hazards of the work, assessing the risks involved, and putting measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

Many church staff and volunteers will work alone as part of their work at the church. The church has in place procedures for dealing with known troublemakers from among the public. Provision has also been made for equipment such as mobile phones, panic buttons and personal alarms.

Infection Control

The Church recognises that it has a responsibility as a public meeting place to ensure it follows good practice relating to infection control. Therefore, the church will ensure that it follows relevant government guidance in relation to public health issues such as pandemics and will take appropriate steps to safeguard the health of its staff, volunteers, and parishioners.



Appendix I

This section of the health & safety policy should be updated regularly in line with staff turnover.

Role	Name
Clergy Member	Rev. Richard Partridge (interim Vicar)
Facilities Manager (nominated Health & Safety Officer)	Tony Player
Facilities Team with Verger Duties	Paul Saunders\Greg Rolls
Chief Operations Officer	Elspeth Sully
Church Wardens	Pat Richards Hazel Baker
Deputies	John Hicks & Jeff Perkins
Director of Music	Simon Earl
Head Welcomer	Sally King
Tower Captain	Rosemary Rogers
Childrens and Families	Harvey Gollins
Head Server	Diane Wright

Health & Safety Reps at Fabric Committee

Role	Name
PCC Member & Fabric Chair	Roger Mason
Chief Operations Officer	Elspeth Sully
Facilities Manager & Health & Safety Officer	Tony Player
Facilities Team Members	Greg Rolls/Paul Saunders

Associated Policies

(Governance)

Top Level Policies

- Safeguarding
- Equality & Diversity
- Risk Register
- Data Protection
- Complaints

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