



Trinity United Reformed Church

Ulster Road, Lancaster, LA1 4AH

Health and Safety Policy

Date:February 2023
Review Date:February 2025

This document is based on an outline supplied by Ecclesiastical Insurance Group plc as a service to its customers. It has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

The Policy is in three sections:		Page
A	General Statement of Policy	3
B	Organisation and Responsibilities	4
C	Arrangements - Implementation of the Policy	5
	1. Accident and First Aid	5
	2. Fire Safety	5
	3. Electrical Safety and Lighting	8
	4. Gas Equipment Safety	8
	5. Hazardous Substances	8
	6. Grass Cutting and Maintenance of Machinery	8
	7. Slips, Trips and Falls	8
	8. Working at High Levels	8
	9. Preparation of Food	8
	10. Manual Handling	8
	11. Hazardous Buildings and Glazing	9
	12. Members of the Church Family visiting the premises alone	9
	13. Activities which may need special procedures	9
	14. Risk Assessments	9
	15. Contractors	10
	16. Information and Enforcement	10

Note to all church personnel, voluntary helpers, hiring organisations and contractors

The success of this policy will depend upon your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety.

SECTION A

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

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 users of our premises, 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 church officers, voluntary helpers and members of the congregation (hereafter referred to as 'the church family'), as well as contractors, visitors, hirers of our premises and any others who may come to the church, church hall, vestry etc.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we 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 buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it operates will be reviewed at least every three years and appropriate changes made in order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review.

Signed: ...Alison Scott..... On behalf of Elders

Date:...1st February 2023.....

Review Date:...February 2025

SECTION B

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Responsibility of Serving Elders

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Serving Elders of Trinity URC who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy Health and Safety Regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice.

To ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out, reviewed and updated, the Serving Elders are to:

- be familiar with Health and Safety Regulations insofar as they concern church premises
- be familiar with the Trinity URC Health and Safety Policy and arrangements and ensure that they are observed
- ensure that a copy of the Trinity URC Health and Safety Policy is displayed in an accessible place in the church premises
- ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place
- ensure that arrangements are in place to keep the church premises clean and tidy
- ensure that arrangements are in place for the gardens to be properly maintained.
- ensure that adequate access to and egress from church premises is maintained
- ensure that adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained
- ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are in place

2. Responsibility of the Lettings Officer

The responsibility of the Lettings Officer is to:

- ensure that all hirers of the church premises have access to and are familiar with the Trinity URC Health and Safety Policy in advance of the hire period

3. Responsibility of the Church Family

The Church Family has 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 property. The church family must therefore:

- comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures
- use protective clothing and equipment when it is required
- report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to a Serving Elder
- report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible
- not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety

Section C

ARRANGEMENTS

(Implementation of the Policy)

This section sets out the arrangements to minimise risks, as far as is reasonably practicable, to the health and safety of the Church Family, visitors and contractors, and outlines actions to be taken in furtherance of health and safety. Where these arrangements require specific inspection or audits the completion of these shall be reported to the Serving Elders or to the Church Meeting as necessary and recorded under the heading of 'Health and Safety' in the Elders' or Church Meeting minutes.

1 Accident and First Aid

A first aid box and Accident Book is located in the Church kitchen. All accidents, injuries, cases of serious illness, and dangerous occurrences shall be entered in the Accident Book and be reported to Lettings Officer. For more significant incidents (ie. RIDDOR incidents – see below), an accident report form shall be completed and our insurers and Synod informed. Accident books and records shall be reviewed monthly.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 - RIDDOR

Fatal accidents, major injuries and dangerous occurrences must be reported within 10 days by the Health and Safety Officer to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. The preferred method for doing this is by completing an online report. The relevant forms and guidance can be obtained from www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/. The following is a summary of the injuries or occurrences which must be reported (for further information, refer to the aforementioned website):

- the death of any person which arises from a work-related accident, including an act of physical violence to a worker.
- specified injuries to workers including fractures, burns, head injuries (for a full list see the HSE website)
- injuries to workers which result in their incapacitation for more than 7 days
- injuries to non-workers which result in them being taken directly to hospital for treatment

2. Fire Safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

- an assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings and the risks to our neighbours. This is carried out as a part of our general health and safety risk assessments

- a check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned
- a check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire
- a check that people who may be in the building can get out safely
- to provide fire exit signs
- to provide reasonable fire-fighting equipment
- a regular check that our fire-fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company.

Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

<i>Location</i>	<i>Type of extinguisher and capacity</i>
Hall	Foam
Kitchen	Fire blanket
Kitchen	Foam
Church (Rear)	Foam & CO2
Church (Front)	Foam
Vestry	Foam
Storeroom	CO2

The extinguishers noted above are checked every month by the responsible person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged. They are checked every 12 months and serviced by Walker Fire of Preston.

Evacuation procedure

Procedures for stewarding and evacuation are as follows

- All fire exits are clearly marked with the green 'Running Man' symbol and all designated fire doors should be unlocked before any event commences. The front church door should be unlocked
- A check should be made that all doors can be opened.
- For large services and concerts where the congregation exceeds 100, trained stewards should be allocated to each door and have responsibility for persons in a specific part of the church.
- In the event of an emergency, an announcement to leave the building will be made by the senior church officer available and stewards will direct to the nearest exit
- All persons should assemble outside in the Car Park, adjacent to bottom railings.
- The emergency services should be contacted immediately by the **Duty Elder** or the **Lead Person**.

Evacuation drills

It is not considered practical to conduct general evacuation drills from the church premises. Such drills would not necessarily involve the majority of the church members and, since it is unacceptable to interrupt worship, would therefore be unrepresentative. The responsibility for following the procedures described herein lies with the Duty Elder (in the case of church services) or the lead person (in the case of external groups/organisations hiring the church premises).

If you discover a fire (no matter how small)

- immediately raise the alarm
- telephone the emergency services
- Duty Elder or lead person to check the building for occupants
- attack the fire if possible and within your capability, using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk
- if it is not possible to attack the fire or if you are unsure which fire extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring that all doors are closed behind you. The general rule is 'people before property'
- evacuate to the designated assembly point
- ensure clear access to the car park for the emergency vehicles

3. Electrical Safety and Lighting

PAT testing for portable electrical appliances is carried out to HSE Standards. The **Caretaker will** be responsible for periodically checking these items **at other times and recording these checks as well as** arranging for repair or replacement by an approved dealer. All portable appliances - **with the exception of the sound and media system** - shall be switched off at sockets and their plugs removed when not in use, in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines

The condition of the main electrical fixed system shall be ascertained by a competent approved contractor at intervals of not more than five years. Sockets and switches shall be periodically inspected by designated church officers and any damage made good. Any installer of temporary electrical equipment shall confirm that the equipment has been inspected and is safe. Extension cables shall be laid so as not to cause a tripping hazard.

All light bulbs that need replacement shall be replaced at the first opportunity. Care shall be taken to ensure that the circuit containing the bulb is switched off and the light fitting is not live.

4. Gas Equipment Safety

The church's gas boiler shall be serviced annually and as necessary by a competent approved contractor from the Gas Safe Register. Any necessary work required for safety shall be implemented immediately.

5. Hazardous Substances

Only normal domestic cleaning materials shall be used in the cleaning of the church premises. Such materials shall only be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. In an emergency the manufacturer's first aid directions shall be followed. No hazardous substances shall be used or stored without the express permission of the Elders.

6. Grass Cutting and Maintenance of Machinery

All activity and equipment relating to the maintenance of the church gardens are the responsibility of the contractor.

7. Slips, Trips and Falls (condition of floors, steps and paths)

To reduce, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of slips, trips and falls, periodic inspections shall be made by church officers of the premises' floors (paying particular attention to carpeted areas) and external footpaths. Any repair or attention needed shall be noted and remedial action taken. Any trip and/or fall by any person shall be noted and the location inspected.

8. Working at High Levels

A-frame steps may be used to the height of approximately 2m without the need for a second person to be present. The use of ladders shall require a second person to be in attendance. A-frame steps and ladders shall be positioned such that they are stable and not liable to slip. Where feasible, ladders shall be secured.

9. Preparation of Food

Our food safety management procedures are drawn from the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006 as follows:

- The kitchen is **not** designated as a food preparation area.
- We ensure that all food handlers have received adequate supervision, instruction and training
- We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be heated to the correct temperatures
- We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.
- All food beyond the sell by/use by date will be disposed of.

10. Manual Handling (lifting, carrying and moving loads)

Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable. Any requirement to lift or move heavy or awkwardly shaped objects shall require the assistance of additional persons or suitable equipment.

11. Hazardous Buildings and Glazing

Our policy is to ensure that buildings are safe and without risk to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use them. The church premises are subject to a Quinquennial Inspection by a surveyor who makes recommendations with regard to any necessary remedial work and the timescale for it to be carried out. The last inspection was in **July 2021**, the recommendations of which are in hand if not already completed, **taking into account the ongoing planned extension and refurbishment of the church buildings.**

Between Quinquennial Inspections, the **Caretaker** and serving Elders shall monitor the fabric of the church premises and take appropriate action where any deterioration in condition is suspected.

Periodic checks shall be made by the **Caretaker** and Serving Elders (calling on expert advice if required) of all glazing in the buildings to ensure that any glass in windows or doors is safe. Where necessary, temporary measures shall be taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

12. Members of the Church Family visiting the premises alone

Members of the church family who have need to visit the church premises alone should be aware that this poses a risk to personal safety. This risk is greater during twilight and hours of darkness when undesirable persons may not be easily recognised. Persons visiting the church alone at such times should always be aware of potential risk. Except during official opening times, when fewer than three persons are in the church they shall lock themselves in after entry and not answer the door to anyone seeking entry. Anyone with authorised entry will have keys to allow entry. Personal risk (and risk to church property) can be mitigated by taking the following precautions:

- make the visit by car and park as near as possible to the church doors
- in darkness carry a torch with a strong beam.
- always consider taking someone with you.

13. Activities which may need special procedures

For all concerts, recitals, candlelit services, fetes and any similar function, relevant church officers and other organisers shall consider any risks likely to occur and make a plan to eliminate or reduce such risks.

14. Risk Assessments

Risks, as they are identified, shall be assessed by the Serving Elders in accordance with the principles laid down in this policy. The results of such reviews and action taken or recommended, shall be recorded under the heading of Health and Safety in the minutes of the Elders' or Church Meeting.

15. Contractors

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following

- have their own Health and Safety Policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy.
- produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employer's liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained.
- comply with all the requirements of this Health and Safety Policy and co-operate with the church officers in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.
- where plant and machinery is brought onto the church premises by contractors, they must be able to show, where necessary, that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.
- contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officers. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.
- all contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. This 'permit to work' will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.

17. Information and Enforcement

Lancaster City Council Environmental Health Department is the enforcement agency to which enquiries or reports of major accidents should be addressed. It can be contacted as follows:

Lancaster City Council
Town Hall
Dalton Square
Lancaster
LA1 1PJ

Telephone: 01524 582000

Email: customerservicecentre@lancaster.gov.uk

