

Parish of Good Shepherd & St. Peter, Lee

Health & Safety Policy

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SECTION A: Introduction

The Church of the Good Shepherd and St. Peter's are not exempt from health and safety legislation. Local Authority Environmental Health Officers are specifically charged with enforcing health and safety legislation in churches.

The Health and Safety Executive have advised that it is good practice for volunteers to be provided with the same level of health and safety training and protection as if they were employees. This means that our churches should follow exactly the same regulations and practice to ensure the health and safety of volunteers and other persons using the church as if they were employees.

The Church of the Good Shepherd and St. Peter's do not have to have a written health and safety policy, as the parish employs less than five people. However due to the requirement to make adequate arrangements for health and safety it is acknowledged that the easiest way to do this is to set out the arrangements in writing.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policies.

SECTION B: General Statement of Policy

The parish 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 employees, casual labour and voluntary helpers, 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 members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church, and associated buildings.

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 light of any changes to our buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed annually 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 meetings of the PCC and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on an annual basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

SECTION C: Organisation and Responsibilities

1 Responsibilities of the Vicar

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Vicar who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to specified members of the PCC. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list included in section C.6 will be amended accordingly.

2. Responsibilities of the Churchwardens

Responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary is with the Churchwardens.

3. Responsibilities of the PCC

The PCC has general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

4. Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The Health and Safety Officer carries the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy:

The responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer shall be to:

- Be familiar with the health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises.

- Be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed.
- Ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place.
- Ensure the church and hall is kept clean and tidy.
- Ensure the external church areas are properly maintained by the grounds contractors.
- Ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required.
- Ensure that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training.
- Ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained.
- Ensure that the Fire Evacuation Plan is kept up to date and operational.
- Ensure that the fire risk assessment form is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- Ensure that food hygiene regulation and procedures are observed.

5. Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

All employees and voluntary workers 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. Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

- Comply with safety rules, operating instruction and working procedures.
- Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
- Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person.
- 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.

6. Responsible Persons

The following are responsible for safety in particular areas:

Responsibility / Area	Name / Position	Relevant Policy Section
Accident book / accident reporting	Churchwarden(s)	D.1
Fire extinguishers	Churchwarden(s)	D.2
Responsible Person for Fire Safety	Vicar	D.2
Competent Person for Fire Safety	H & S Officer	D.2 & Appendix 1
Fire risk assessment	Conway Tearle	D.2
Emergency evacuation	Churchwarden(s)	D.2

Portable electrical appliances	Churchwarden(s)	D.3.1
Fixed electrical system	Churchwarden(s)	D.3.4
Gas equipment	Churchwarden(s)	D.4
Hazardous Substances (COSHH)	H & S Officer	D.5
Plant and machinery	Churchwarden(s)	D.6
Condition of floors and stairs	Churchwarden(s)	D.7.1
Condition of church grounds	Churchwarden(s)	D.7.2
Light bulb changing	Churchwarden(s)	D.8
Working at high levels	Churchwarden(s)	D.9
Food Preparation	PCC Member - Food Hygiene Certificate Holder	D.10
Manual Handling	Churchwarden(s)	D.11
Building defects (incl. glazing)	Churchwarden(s)	D.12
Asbestos	H & S Officer	D.13
Safeguarding	Parish Safeguarding Officer	D.15 & D.16
Personal Safety	Churchwarden(s)	D.14
Contractors	Churchwarden(s)	D.17
Computer workstation assessment	H&S Officer / Vicar	D.18
Health and Safety Training	Churchwarden(s) / H&S Officer	N/A

SECTION D: Arrangements Regarding the Implementation of this Policy:

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of employees, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors.

1. Accidents and First Aid:

First aid boxes are located
in the kitchen (St. Peter's)
in the kitchen (Good Shepherd)

The accident book is located
in the kitchen (St. Peter's)
in the kitchen (Good Shepherd)

A list of those who can be called upon in the event of an accident or emergency is on the vestry noticeboard.

There is also a 'resilience kit' in the clergy vestry at the Good Shepherd in case of an emergency or major incident in the parish, so that the church is able to respond swiftly should the building be required to provide emergency shelter to people caught up in any such incident.

In the event of an accident, clergy and churchwardens will be able to identify those who are qualified to administer first aid should this be required.

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book and our insurers and Health and Safety Officer advised where appropriate. If the church or church hall is let to outside organisations, the contract stipulates that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book.

Accident books and accident records are regularly reviewed by the PCC.

Accidents meeting the requirements of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) will be reported by the churchwarden(s) and to the Health and Safety Officer. The H&S Officer to report RIDDOR classed accidents.

2. Fire safety:

The Church of the Good Shepherd and St. Peter's policy is to fulfil our obligation under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this an annual fire risk assessment is undertaken, and the fire extinguishers are checked on annual basis.

For details of our fire evacuation procedure see Appendix 1.

Where 'Hot Works' tasks are to be carried out by any person e.g. the use of abrasive grinding, welding, soldering, the use of any heat or flame providing tool or equipment, these tasks significantly increase the risk of fire and must be authorised by the Churchwarden(s). Where work is being undertaken by a member of the Church Buildings Team, an additional Fire Risk Assessment should be done before work commences. Contractors are required to provide a Fire Risk Assessment for the task before commencing any 'Hot Works' on church premises.

3. Electrical safety:

3.1 A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the responsible person, and all our portable electrical equipment will be PAT tested (Portable Appliance Testing) annually by an electrical PAT testing contractor with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, knows how to use it, and can correctly interpret the result. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of. Evidence of this will be provided on an annual basis as part of the Archdeacon's Annual Inspection.

3.2 On an annual basis plugs, cables, sockets and portable electrical appliances will be inspected by the responsible person to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads.

3.3 On an annual basis a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation by the responsible person.

- 3.4 Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a “Full Scope” member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out. Evidence of this will be provided on an annual basis as part of the Archdeacon’s Annual Inspection.
- 3.5 Every three years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers.
- 3.6 It is our policy not to sell any second-hand electrical goods.
- 3.7 Hall hire contracts stipulate that any electrical equipment that is brought on site should be PAT (Portable Appliance Test) tested before use, and this may be checked by the churchwardens at any point.
- 3.8 The hall hire policy prohibits the use of deep fat fryers in the building.
- 3.9 Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill. All employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:
 - Visually check all electrical equipment before use
 - Report all faults immediately to the responsible person
 - Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment
 - No electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered in the electrical equipment record.
 - Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods.
 - Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

4. Gas 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. Evidence of this will be provided on an annual basis as part of the Archdeacon’s Annual Inspection.

5. Hazardous Substances:

The Health and Safety Officer will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used in the church/hall. Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible our safety arrangements are as follows:

For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment', data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers are used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, and action to take in the event of an accident.

Where hazardous substances are used, the person using the substances should ensure that they are aware of the potential hazards, and follow the recommended safety precautions.

6. Plant and machinery:

The responsible person will maintain a list of all items of plant and machinery. The procedures for checking and rules for use are as follows:

- 6.1 Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.
- 6.2 Employees and voluntary workers must not ride on any parts of machinery not intended for that use.
- 6.3 Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made.
- 6.4 After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used.
- 6.5 Before using any item of plant or machinery, a check must be made to ensure it is in a safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects.
- 6.6 The appropriate personal protective equipment detailed below must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery.
- 6.7 Persons under the age of 18 may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery.
- 6.8 Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person and to the church H&S Officer.
- 6.9 All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.
- 6.10 Persons must not work on their own unless they have notified a colleague churchwarden, or Clergy and Church Administrator of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on.

7. Slips, Trips and Falls – Condition of Floors, Steps and Paths:

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risks of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every quarter by the responsible person(s) of:

- All floors and stairs in the church and hall
- All paths and steps in the church grounds. Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths, especially in wet and damp weather and ice and snow on paths in winter months. Ice and snow on paths to be treated with rock salt and/or sand by churchwarden(s). Any defects will be reported to the churchwarden(s) who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.
- Any spillages should be mopped up immediately, and warning signs should be put in place when floors are wet, or have just been cleaned.

8. Working at height:

The following areas are designated as height: **Lighting in church building**
 Guttering on church building

Only the following persons may work at height: **Members of the buildings team**

Ladders may only be used when other equipment such as tower scaffolds or mobile elevated work platforms cannot be used or are unavailable. Ladders should only be used for work of short duration, provided that the ladder can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties, a suitable ladder stay frame, or ensuring that a second person has secured the ladder before it is mounted.

Working at heights should be undertaken using only an appropriate stepladder or ladder, other items should not be used.

The following items of equipment should be inspected by Health and Safety Officer in accordance with an inspection programme:

Item	Inspection Arrangements
Ladders and stepladders	Inspection prior to each use and inspected and recorded annually by the H&S Officer

9. Lighting:

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every quarter by the responsible person(s) to ensure that all lights in the church, hall and grounds are working. Any bulbs / tubes that require replacing will be reported to the churchwarden(s) who will ensure that the bulbs / tubes are replaced following appropriate safety procedures.

10. Preparation of Food:

At least one member of the PCC will have a level 2 food hygiene certificate, and will ensure that where appropriate, training is provided, and that all guidelines are for the preparation, storage, handling and serving of food are followed.

11. Manual Handling – Lifting, Carrying and Moving Loads:

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 risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts and hoists as far as is possible. Alternatively, loads will be broken down into manageable portions. Those responsible for lifting, carrying and moving loads should ensure that other people who are involved have been given suitable guidance about the safest way to do it.

12. Hazardous Buildings and Glazing:

Our policy is to ensure that our buildings are safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this, the buildings are inspected every year by the responsible person(s). Any defects noted are immediately reported to the churchwarden(s) and the procedures put in hand for repairs. Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

An asbestos check is scheduled to take place every autumn with results of findings recorded in Asbestos Register, by the H&S Officer.

A check is made of all glazing in the buildings to ensure that any glass in windows below waist height and in doors and beside doors below shoulder height is on a safety material or is protected against breakage.

13. Asbestos

Full asbestos surveys have been undertaken by Blue A Ltd (asbestos surveyors) internally and externally, for both buildings. The findings are recorded in their survey reports - and Appendix 1 Asbestos Registers. Where necessary, appropriate actions have been taken - these include implementing an Asbestos Management Policy, managing and monitoring the asbestos where found by regular recorded inspections, risk assessments, and labelling asbestos. The full surveys are stored in the Church Office and – as appropriate - will be made available together with risk assessments to contractors working on the site. H&S Officer to ensure annual checks of locations of Asbestos and made and findings are recorded in Asbestos Register.

14. Personal Safety and Lone Working:

Please see Appendix 2 – Guidelines for Pastoral Visits and Lone Working.

All clergy / staff / volunteers should exercise appropriate caution when working alone in the Church Office or at either church. It is recommended that the church doors are kept locked, and when opening up for a service / event that the doors are opened shortly before the published start time.

15. Risk Assessments/Activities:

Risk assessments should be completed on all new activities / events, and a copy stored in the church office. Existing risk assessments should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and following any accident, incident or 'near miss'.

All risk assessments are completed and assessed by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 e.g. Health & Safety Officer, Clergy, Churchwardens, Safeguarding Officers.

16. Safeguarding:

As a church in the Diocese of Southwark we follow the policies, procedures and guidelines for safeguarding children and adults who may be vulnerable that are set out in 'A Safe Church' (a copy of which can be found on the Diocesan website).

For more information please refer to the Church's Safeguarding Policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

17. 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 of the same.
- Produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place.
- Comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.

- Where plant and machinery is brought onto 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 officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.
- All contractors will be notified of any areas containing asbestos material and given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake.

18. Information and Enforcement:

Environmental Health Service Information:

Lewisham Council
Wearside Service Centre,
Wearside Road, London
SE13 7EZ

020 8314 2170

Employment Medical Advisory Service Information:

Rose Court,
2 Southwark Bridge,
London
SE1 9HS

020 7556 2100

Reviewed and approved by the PCC 24th May 2023

APPENDIX 1

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedure – Good Shepherd

1. When the worship area is in use the emergency exits in the choir vestry and by the kitchen should be unlocked. If the hall is being used the two west doors must also be unlocked.
2. In the event of a fire being discovered in the church building the Churchwarden in charge shall ring 999 stating: **'Fire / Emergency (stating type of emergency) at Church of the Good Shepherd Handen Road SE12 8NR'**. Alternatively, the Churchwarden may delegate this task to someone else, asking them to report back when the alarm has been raised.
3. On discovery of a fire, the Churchwarden / Deputy Warden shall inform the Minister leading the service. If the youth / children's activities are in progress a sidesperson shall inform the leaders in charge.
4. The Minister shall stop the service and instruct the congregation to leave the building immediately by the nearest safe exit - ensuring that these are pointed out, and to **gather at the Assembly Point on the lawn at the Wantage Rd of the site**. If the youth / children's activities are in progress the Minister tells the parents / carers that their children will be taken outside by the leaders, and that they should not go and collect them. The Minister shall also ask those sitting near people with impaired mobility to give help as necessary.
5. The Sidespeople on duty shall ensure that people leave the church in an orderly manner e.g. one section of seating at a time. Any people with impaired mobility should be helped to leave the building last of all, and the Sidespeople should then check that the church / worship area is completely evacuated.
6. The youth / children's leaders should ensure that all children and helpers are evacuated from the side rooms by the nearest safe route.
7. The Churchwarden, Deputy Warden and Minister should then:
 - i. Check that there is no one in the toilets, including the disabled toilet
 - ii. Check that there is no one in the clergy vestry or choir vestry
 - iii. Check that there is no one in the kitchen, side rooms or foyers
8. Fire extinguishers should only be used by Church Officers e.g. Churchwardens, Deputy Wardens, Health & Safety Officer, Youth / Children's Leaders, etc. Once ONE extinguisher has been used the person should leave the building – even if the fire is out.
9. When the congregation has gathered on the lawn at the Assembly Point at the Wantage Rd end of the site, parents / carers should collect their children from the youth / children's leaders. Children will remain with the leaders until they are collected.
10. Once the building has been evacuated no one should re-enter the building until it is declared safe to do so by an officer from the Fire Brigade.
11. Users of the Church and Church Hall, as part of their obligation to operate with regard to health and safety, must be aware of the location of the emergency exits, have them unlocked and kept clear of obstructions. Organised groups are asked to follow the 'Church Hall Evacuation Policy'.

Revised June 2018

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedure – St. Peter’s

1. The emergency exits at St. Peter’s are through the main entrance, and located at the rear of the hall.
2. In the event of a fire being discovered in the church building the Churchwarden in charge shall ring 999 or ask for someone else to do this stating: **‘Fire / Emergency (stating type of emergency) at St. Peter’s Church, Eltham Rd, SE12 8HQ’**. Alternatively the Churchwarden may delegate this task to someone else, asking them to report back when the alarm has been raised.
3. On discovery of a fire, the Churchwarden shall inform the Minister leading the service. If there is a children’s group in the vestry the Churchwarden should also ensure they are informed, and ask them to wait for their parents to collect them.
4. The Minister shall stop the service and instruct the congregation to leave the building immediately by the nearest safe exit - ensuring that these are pointed out, and to **gather at the Assembly Point at the far end of the car park, adjacent to Weigall Rd**. If the children are meeting in the vestry, the Minister tells the parents / carers that they need to collect their children before leaving the building. The Minister shall also ask those sitting near people with impaired mobility to give help as necessary.
5. The Sidespeople on duty shall ensure that people leave the church in an orderly manner e.g. one section of seating at a time. Any people with impaired mobility should be helped to leave the building last of all, and the Sidespeople should then check that the church / worship area is completely evacuated.
6. The Churchwarden and Minister should then:
 - i. Check that there is no one in the vestry
 - ii. Check that there is no one in the toilets, including the disabled toilet
 - iii. Check that there is no one in the kitchen
7. Fire extinguishers should only be used by Church Officers e.g. Churchwardens, Minister, Deputy Wardens, Health & Safety Officer, Sidesperson etc. Once ONE extinguisher has been used the person should leave the building – even if the fire is out.
8. Once the building has been evacuated no one should re-enter the building until it is declared safe to do so by an officer from the Fire Brigade.
9. Users of the Church and Church Hall, as part of their obligation to operate with regard to health and safety, must be aware of the location of the emergency exits, have them unlocked and kept clear of obstructions. Organised groups are asked to follow the ‘Church Hall Evacuation Policy’.

Appendix 2

Guidelines for Pastoral Visits & Lone Working

All those involved in pastoral care should familiarise themselves with Section 7 'Care' in A Safer Church, and section 4.12 'Visiting adults who may be vulnerable in their homes'.

To ensure the wellbeing and safety of all, the following guidelines for pastoral visits are recommended:

- Always do an informal assessment of risk before visiting someone in their own home. If there are any concerns or risks, give careful consideration to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, and whether it might be possible to take another adult.
- Where possible, arrange the visit in advance, and let someone else know that you'll be doing a visit.
- Notify clergy / administrator when the visit is due to take place so that it can be recorded.
- Take your mobile phone to the meeting. Ensure it is fully charged, and switched ON. Take a torch for darker evenings, or use the torch function on your phone.
- If you are concerned about a particular meeting, notify another member of the clergy, pastoral team or church administrator, and ask them to telephone at an agreed time if you haven't made contact after the meeting.
- If, on arrival, your instinct tells you that there might be a problem e.g. under the influence of alcohol or drugs, inappropriately dressed etc. explain that you're double booked and have come to rearrange the visit.
- Do not enter a bedroom, unless it is to visit someone confined to bed, in which case ensure there is another adult present e.g. carer, next of kin etc.
- If there are any significant pastoral concerns, share with the Incumbent, Parish Safeguarding Officer or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, as appropriate.
- Re-notify the person again from a place of safety, i.e. a parked car, or well-lit area away from premises of visit that the meeting has finished and that you are safe.

LONE WORKING

- Lone Working should be avoided whenever possible.
- When possible volunteers should work with another person, or have another person present as an observer for safety.
- Church Wardens, and volunteers when working alone must ensure someone is aware of their Lone Working, and of their whereabouts. This person could be a spouse/partner/friend or other person known to them.
- The person working alone should make contact with this other person before commencing work and make contact again during the day, or period of work.
- Person working alone should inform this other person when Lone Working has finished for that day and that they have LEFT the premises, or returned home if working away from church premises.
- When working alone, person should have with them a fully charged mobile phone and on darker evenings a torch/mobile phone with torch function.
- Before working alone consideration should be given to further pre-cautions and whether a risk assessment is required.
- When working on the church premises alone, if there are other users in the building e.g. hall users, alert them to your presence - if you can do so without disrupting their session. Alert them if leaving the building before them.
- When working alone in church premises, keep exterior doors locked when appropriate.
- Church Wardens/volunteers working alone from church premises should take guidance from the "Guidelines for Pastoral Visits" above.