



The Parish of St Mary the Virgin

Ringmer

Registered Charity No 1131869

Health and Safety Policy

Name of the Church: Saint Mary the Virgin

Address: Church Hill, Ringmer, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 5JX

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Preamble

As a church we understand that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church, church room or churchyard.

We also know that, where we are an employer, and variously use premises or make them available for the use of others, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety law.

We have drafted this policy to meet our duty under Section 2 (3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

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 for our employees, volunteers, congregation, visitors and others who may use the church, churchyard or any other building we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) accepts its overall responsibility for this. We will ensure adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make will have due regard for it.

We will appoint a member of the PCC to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. We will keep health and safety matters under review at appropriate intervals. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

It is the duty of each employee and volunteer 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.

Further detail about our organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety is set out in this document. A copy of it will be kept in the church and made available to others on request.

Signed

Rev'd David Bouskill

Date --/--/----

Health and Safety Policy

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The member of the PCC with overall responsibility for implementing our policy is;

Ken Humm

They will ensure that:

- The standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained.
- Where necessary, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained.
- Any hazards reported to them are rectified immediately.
- Only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests.
- Any accidents are investigated, recorded and reported if necessary.
- Relevant health and safety documents and records are retained.
- They keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church
- Set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

The Churchwardens have day-to-day responsibility for implementing our policy. They are;

Anne Franklin and Andrew Edgar

They will ensure that:

- All employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- 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.
- Any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible.
- Where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger.
- All accidents are reported in-line with the requirements of this policy
- Advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy
- Set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or 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, 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 any accident.
- Do not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

2. Arrangements

This section sets out our general arrangements for managing health and safety and dealing with specific risks. We have removed any points that do not apply to our activities.

2.1 General Arrangements

Competent Assessment

Where necessary, we will appoint someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations. Where an appointment is made we will record the details here.

Our person appointed to assist us is to be appointed as and when is necessary.

Risk assessment

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

A list of Risk Assessments is contained in the Appendix attached to this document covering the Church Room and the Bell tower. In the event of changing circumstances, eg a health epidemic, these will be amended accordingly.

Information and Training

We will provide any necessary information and training for our employees and volunteers in a timely manner. We 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.

First Aid

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including- as a minimum – a suitably stocked first aid box and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information for employees and volunteers.

Our first aid box is located in the kitchen in the cupboard on the right hand side above the work surface.

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is Richard Vincent

Accident Reporting

We will keep an accident book and record details therein. We will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of certain accidents to employees, volunteers and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries.

Our Accident Book is kept in the kitchen on the left hand side of the work surface.

Monitoring

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate. We will also ensure that any lifting, work or electrical equipment and church utilities are inspected as necessary to ensure they remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

Contractors

If we employ contractors, we make sure they have their own health and safety policy and public and Employers liability Insurance by asking to see copies of the relevant documents.

Record Keeping

Our Health and Safety Risk Assessments, records and other documents are kept in the safe located in the Choir Vestry.

2.2 Specific Arrangements

Asbestos

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos (and other hazardous materials, such as RAAC) in our buildings and, if so, assess the risk from it. We

will then implement a plan to manage that risk. We will also provide relevant information to others who might need it (for example, building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and any plans we have made.

Bell Ringing

We will ensure that adequate precautions are in place to protect bell ringers and others who may enter the ringing room and bell chamber. This will include any emergency evacuation procedure, a safe means of heating, the provision of fire extinguishers, the provision of emergency lighting, and the notification of safety procedures to visiting bell ringers.

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 bearing in mind that expert advice may well be required. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing.

Churchyard

We will ensure that boundary walls and gates are kept in good repair. We will have trees inspected by a competent person and have any necessary work carried out to make them safe. Headstones, tombs and monuments will be checked regularly to ensure they are properly maintained. Where our churchyard is formally closed, we will report any concern to the Local Authority or Parish Council. A build-up of grass cuttings against any timber fences should be avoided to prevent fire damage. Paths will be kept in good order and in a safe condition. Paths rendered hazardous by bad weather or other conditions will be clearly signed with warning noticed, or closed if necessary

Construction Work

Where maintenance, refurbishment and restoration work is planned for our church, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts. We will also determine if we have any

responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and comply with these is necessary.

Display Screen Equipment

Where our employees and volunteers regularly use computers for continuous periods of an hour or more, we will analyse workstations to identify risks and precautions, implementing these precautions as necessary. We will also provide information, training, eye/eyesight tests (on request) and special spectacles if needed.

Electricity

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliances are maintained so as to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made where appropriate.

Events

Where we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services and fundraising events, we will identify any additional precautions that are necessary and implement these.

Fire

We will complete a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and take in the event of a fire. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

Heating Systems

We will ensure that the heating systems in the church and church rooms are suitably maintained and checked annually by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately and we will keep records of the checks made.

Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning of horticultural products or petrol. We will ensure that these are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the

manufacturers' instructions taking, any necessary precautions that are specified.

Lifting Equipment

We will ensure that any lifting equipment is properly maintained and thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person.

Manual handling

We will avoid the need for lifting or carrying heavy objects as far as is possible. Where this is not practicable, we will make use of lifting aids (such as, trolleys) or other precautions including team lifting.

Preparation of Food

We will ensure that on those occasions when we prepared food, we use a clean and disinfectant work surface, utensils and equipment. We will store food in such a way as to avoid contamination, provide hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste.

Slips and Trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips and trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled 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, hand rails or lighting) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the choices we make. We will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

Tower tours

Where we plan to run tower tours, we will identify any specific precautions that are necessary. This will take account of the size of the tower, the control of movement within the tower, the number of stewards available, and the ease with persons can safely evacuate the tower in case of an emergency. We will then implement these.

Working at Height

Where possible we will try and avoid the need to 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.

Work equipment

Any work equipment (including any hand tools) we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained. Where necessary, some equipment (such as, ladders) will be regularly checked to make sure they are safe. We will keep records of any checks we make.

Working Alone

We will identify circumstances where our employees and volunteers work alone, and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety. (See also the PCC's Guidance Safe Practice for Lone Working.)

When carrying out work within the church or in the church yard involving the use a ladder a second person must be present at the bottom of the ladder to prevent it moving whilst it is being climbed.

3. Appendices

The following are examples of Risk Assessments relating to the use of the Church room and the Bell Tower

3.1 St Marys Church Room – Used during the COVID outbreak. Under normal circumstances only the references to handling food and general safety would apply. However details of additional hazards can be added as suits the situation. Please consult the Safety Officer for guidance should it be necessary to add additional details.

3.2 St Marys Church Bell Tower

3.1. St Marys Church Room - Risk Assessment

What are the hazards?	Who may be harmed and how?	Control measures: What needs to be done or has been done already?	Details, what, if any, further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?
Covid Transmission	All	<p><i>Masks to be worn on entry. Hand sanitiser at door to be used by all entering the room.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure there is adequate ventilation in the room leaving doors and windows open as appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Anyone showing symptoms of Covid or been in direct contact with anyone who has Covid should be asked not to attend.</i></p> <p><i>Only two people to be in the kitchen at any one time as this is a small unventilated space.</i></p>	<p>Reminders – Hands -Face- Space</p> <p>Sanitiser please</p>	All	Throughout
Food / allergies	All	<p><i>Homemade food should be marked with any allergens.</i></p>	<p>Check any allergies or special requirements during the session.</p>	All	Throughout

Accidents	All Various Trips, Slips, Falls, Scalds from water / steam	<p><i>Have a mobile phone</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have a first aid box</i> • <i>Have the post code</i> • <i>Any incidents to be recorded in Accident Book</i> <p><i>Any spillages to be cleared immediately.</i></p>	<p>Check that the first aid box is available in the kitchen.</p> <p>Check for hazards during session</p>	All	Throughout
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Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Ringmer

3.2 RISK ASSESSMENT FOR CHURCH TOWER

Leader with responsibility: Marisa Hayes

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
RINGING ROOM	Unauthorised access	Anyone – caught in ropes	Access at base of tower stairs remains locked When bells are left up between services or before a wedding access at top of stairs is locked	Review location of keys	Steeple keeper Tower Captain	AGM	
	Forgetting to remove clock chimes	Bellringer – swinging bell knocks against clock hammer. Mechanism might cause wheel or bell to stick	Ringling only commences once clock chimes have been removed	Further reminder about removing clock chimes	Tower Captain	Practice after AGM	
	Accidently being caught in moving rope	Anyone – potentially serious injuries	Tower Captain or their nominee always present and supervises less experienced ringer. Loose clothing	All ringers are responsible for one another's safety	All		

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
			removed Visitors/non-ringers sit with feet on floor and not to touch ropes				
	Stay breaking or other mechanical failure	Ringer could be lifted off feet and injure hands on ceiling	Ringers instructed to avoid overpulling. Novices remain under close supervision at all times and told to let go of rope if a broken stay is suspected Steeple keeper checks all equipment as part of regular maintenance	Awareness of ringers' abilities and ability to take action as necessary	Tower Captain or nominee		
	Power cut during ringing	Ringers – loss of control of ropes	Emergency lighting installed to enable bells to be safely set or lowered	Add to regular maintenance check	Steeple keeper		
	Obstructions on floor	Anyone – suffer minor injuries by tripping	Making sure everyone is aware of hazard				

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
	Use of boxes to aid ringing with short ropes	Ringers - Manual handling of larger boxes may risk back injury. Falling off boxes causing minor injuries	All ringers instructed how to use boxes safely				
	Portable electrical equipment	All - electric shocks / trip hazard from cables	Cables covered by mat. Regular inspection of electrical items by electrician	All such equipment to be PAT tested	PCC		
	No emergency exit	All - unable to leave Ringing Room	Internal tower doors never locked when anyone present. Emergency lighting over exit. External tower door key kept in or close to lock	Assess impact of fire at base of tower / ability for people to move up to bell chamber and open louvres	Tower Captain PCC	AGM / PCC	
	Electrical fire	Storage heater has permanent connection. All other items only in use when persons present	Fire extinguishers in place and under regular maintenance by PCC. Tower Captain or	Fire extinguishers in regular maintenance schedule	PCC		

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
		in tower	nominee to act as Fire Warden for safe evacuation				
	Accident	Accidents may happen in and around the church building	Mobile phone First Aid Box in CR kitchen. Post Code BN8 5JX Any incidents to be recorded in Accident Book in CR kitchen	Review with H&S officer	PCC		
BELL CHAMBER /CLOCK	Access via short vertical ladder. Bell frame sticks out into natural climbing line	Anyone allowed access – fall from ladder. Slats break (lower parts have been renewed). Accidental collision with bell frame. Minor injuries, possibly broken bones)	Access restricted to Tower Captain, Steeplekeeper, Churchwardens or their nominees. On occasion visitors invited to climb and take a look at bells, standing on first level by the ladder and never allowed across the frame	Is a disclaimer required? Specific risk assessments undertaken for open days / visits such as Beavers / Brownies etc	PCC		

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
			<p>Instruction given re the hazards prior to anyone climbing the ladder</p> <p>No-one allowed up the ladder unless a second person present.</p>				
	Slips / falls from bell frame	Anyone allowed access – serious injuries	<p>Access restricted. Anyone working amongst the bells is fully briefed re potential dangers. No access to bells allowed if bells are 'up'</p> <p>Frames kept clear of obstructions</p> <p>Rope handrail on beams above bell frame</p> <p>Clear instructions provided to anyone</p>	Is a disclaimer required?			

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
			climbing in and around the bell pits No access allowed unless a second person either in the Bell Chamber or Ringing Room				
	Items dropped through trap door into Ringing Room	Anyone in Ringing Room – serious injuries	Anyone in Ringing Room is made aware that trap door is open and not to stand or sit under it Clear warning given by anyone dropping / lowering items through trap door.				
TOWER ROOF	Inadequate ladder access. Could fall from it	Flag raiser / lowerer – serious injuries.	Not accessed since 2016 due to risks identified	Develop scheme of work replacing internal ladder, creating walkway round bells, increasing height of	PCC		
	Very low parapet slippery walkway, flag often raised or lowered in	Flag raiser / lowerer – serious injuries			PCC		

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
	inclement weather			parapet			
SAFEGUARDING	Potential for grooming, establishing communication outside of tower	Young people and vulnerable adults could be targeted by people in positions of trust	Attendance record held for each ringing session. Occasional visitors added to this record and are often known by band members Band members undertake basic safeguarding course. Tower Captain and those responsible for training undertake CofE Leadership course and maintain DBS checks as per Diocese requirements. Culture of care and respect is encouraged. Tower Captain sets example	Liaise with Safeguarding Officer over course attendees and DBS checks. Liaise with PSO and SCACR safeguarding officer over any concerns / questions. Tower Captain to be made aware if any resident ringers are attending under licence from Diocese and work closely with PSO to ensure good practice is followed. Visiting groups such			

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
			<p>and if concerned by any comments / actions will deal with or seek advice.</p> <p>Permission to ring forms completed by parents who are encouraged to attend / be part of initial training to enable them to understand the risks.</p> <p>Photography permissions are taken into account.</p> <p>Emergency contact details held securely / easy access (Tower Captain or nominee)</p> <p>Careful consideration given to use of social media / Whats App groups and clear transparent</p>	<p>as Beavers / Brownies undertake additional risk assessments.</p>			

Area of tower	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
			communication to young ringer and to parent.				