

St Johns Church, Kenilworth

Fire Safety Policy

version 1.0

Date: 23/09/2021

Authors: Andy Garsed, Roger Homes,

Introduction

This policy is intended to set out our approach to ensuring that all who worship at St John's Church are kept safe from the threat of fire and to reduce any potential damage to the buildings and fabric of the church should a fire occur.

All activities that take place in the church buildings need to be considered in terms of the fire risk people face when interacting with that environment – either as visitors, members of the congregation or ministers and other leaders.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the **Access and Inclusion Policy** as there are a number of overlaps.

The Fire Safety Order came into effect in October 2006 and for the first-time, fire safety legislation was unambiguously applied to churches. People responsible for fire safety will need an understanding of:

- A) the reaction to an emergency by the congregation
- B) the triangle of fire
- C) what is needed for a fire to spread
- D) potential ignition sources
- E) what constitutes combustible materials, or fire load

Protocols around what happens in the event of a fire:

In the event of a fire, an alarm will be raised. The service leader or group leader will clearly explain to the group what is happening and what people will need to do next.

The congregation will move to the car park in the event of a fire where a check will be made on people's welfare and a check made of children/youth against the register. Any children with special needs should be escorted to the assembly point by their respective teachers. It is the responsibility of wardens and the service leaders to ensure the building is clear, including checking of toilets, and that doors and windows are closed where possible. They are also responsible for ensuring the emergency services are alerted where necessary.

Leaders of communities and activities will seek to identify people who they think may require assistance in the event of an emergency. A regular note in the monthly newsletter will invite those who might require assistance in the case of an emergency to identify themselves to the leaders of their respective communities or activity they regularly attend. This message will be voiced from the front during services from time to time.

In order to identify someone with this need, the following will be carried out:-

- a) The PEEP will take into account the needs of the disabled person and their ideas for how they could leave the building.
- b) The PEEP will take into account the resources (people and equipment) that can reasonably be expected to be available.
- c) The PEEP will be reviewed annually to ensure that both parties are happy with the plan.

Plans will be written and held on file in the office.

A fire drill is carried out regularly at least once per year.

The PCC will ensure that:

The Fire Risk Assessment is in place and is kept up to date

That leaders of activities are aware of the need to evacuate the building safely and make sure that procedures are in place to ensure this happen and that enough people have been trained in evacuation procedures and people to help with the safe evacuation of the building are available at all events in the church and church halls.

A procedure for actions in the event of a fire are clearly visible both in the main building as well as the Cavern and halls.

Annual checks are made of fire extinguishers and blankets and leaders are aware of the location of these and are trained how to use them. They should make a note of the date of the service.

Fire exits are clearly marked, and care will be taken not to block access to these exits.

Electrical systems should be tested 5-yearly by a competent contractor in accordance with the IEE regulations (BS7671). Portable appliances should be tested and a record made of the next due date, the interval being decided by an assessment of the risk.

They are aware of the limit on numbers safely permitted to be in the buildings at any one time.

Use of Church Buildings

The church buildings are a no-smoking environment. No person is allowed to smoke in any of these places. Smokers must leave the building and ensure they move at least 20 metres from entrance points in order to ensure safe and healthy access for other people.

Any potentially hazardous activities taking place on church premises (eg burning of debris) should only be carried out once a fire risk assessment has been carried out and a copy given to the Church Administrator. Candles, when in use, must be carefully monitored at all times.

Emergency Lighting

The provision of emergency lighting is to ensure that in the event of power or lighting failure during the hours of darkness, or where there are no windows; people can see the exit routes

and negotiate stairs or steps safely. A responsible person should ensure that the emergency lighting system is checked by simulated power failure;

🕒 monthly to ensure illumination. 🕒 yearly for its full duration.

Record of Tests

A responsible person should ensure that the results of the checking and testing of all fire safety provisions, and training are recorded in a logbook, which should act as a prompt as to the frequency of the tests. These should include:

- a. Fire training
- b. Fire drills
- c. Emergency Lighting where provided
- d. Visits by Fire and Rescue Service Officers.

Sources

Institution of Fire Engineers Special Interest Group for Heritage Buildings Fire Safety for Traditional Church Buildings