

# Sandbach Methodist Church Health & Safety Policy

## **Forward**

*Health & Safety Regulations apply to places where someone is employed. The Health and Safety Executive strongly recommend that volunteers are given the same level of protection as employees and that there is a general duty of care to everyone who uses the church. In addition Local Authority Environmental Health Officers are specifically charged with enforcing aspects of health and safety legislation in public buildings.*

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## **1. 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 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, Church grounds and any 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 the 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 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 meetings of the Church Council, and sub-committees and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Signed:.....[Revd. Kim Stilwell]  
Chair of Church Council

Date:...23 January 2014

[Review date not later than January 2016]

.....

## **2. Organisation and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Responsibility of the Church Council**

The Church Council has overall accountability for health and safety. It will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. The Church Council will also ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

### **2.2 Roles and Responsibilities**

Those persons appointed to these roles carry the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy.

#### **2.2.1 Property Committee**

The detailed content of this policy will be maintained by the Committee, who will also ensure that resources are appropriately prioritised and co-ordinated with the other demands required for good stewardship of the buildings

#### **2.2.2 Property Steward/Secretary**

This job holder will be the main contact with the Circuit/District /Connexion for all property matters including new guidance relating to Health & Safety

#### **2.2.3 Health & Safety Officer**

The responsibility of the person appointed shall be to:

1. be familiar with health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises;
2. be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed;

3. take responsibility for the Property manual
  3. ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place;
  4. ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required;
  5. ensure that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training;
  6. ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained;
  7. ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained;
  8. ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed
  9. have specific responsibility for ....
    - Plant and machinery (6)
    - Working at high levels (9)
    - Contractors (17)
    - Room 6\* (Debt Advice Centre)
- \*this room is only accessible to volunteers and clients of the service and caretakers and master key holders in an emergency*

#### **2.2.4 Buildings Manager**

The responsibility of the person appointed shall be to:

1. provide day to day supervision of the paid caretaker /cleaner
2. ensure the church and Wesley Centre, are clean and tidy;
3. ensure the church grounds are properly maintained
4. have specific responsibility for ....
  - Accident book/Accident reporting (3.1)
  - Storage and safety precautions for hazardous substances
  - Fire alarm system (3.2.2)
  - Fire extinguishers (3.2.1)
  - Portable electrical appliances (3.1)
  - Fixed electrical system (3.4)
  - Manual handling (3.11)
  - Condition of floors and stairs
  - Condition of church grounds
  - Building defects/glazing (3.13)

#### **2.2.5 Project Management**

Various individuals may be asked to lead individual projects and they are also responsible to ensure that health & safety matters are fully considered

#### **2.3 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:

1. comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures;
2. use protective clothing and equipment when it is required;
3. report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person;
4. report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible;
5. not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

A schedule of inducted and trained volunteers will be held in the property manual

## 2.4 Other responsible Persons

Responsibility for safety in particular areas has been also been allocated as follows,:

A nominated person responsible for food preparation (3.10)

The Stewards on duty are responsible for ensuring the premises and external environment are in a safe condition and appropriate safety measures are undertaken throughout times of worship.

Caretakers will check the safe condition of the building between hirers

The Booking Secretary will ensure that hirers have received a copy of the fire policy, the conditions of hire contract, and the safeguarding policy and declaration

The policy is available to all users of the premises

## 3. Arrangements for implementation of the 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, hirers of the Wesley Centre, other visitors and contractors.

### 3.1 Accidents and first aid

First aid boxes are located in the Church washroom, the kitchen and room 1 in the Wesley centre  
Trained first aiders are: Revd Kim Stilwell, Karen Foster, Ann Horsfield, Andrew Stolworthy, Norma Stolworthy. First Aid boxes are checked annually to check contents and expiry dates.

The accident book) is located in the foyer of the Wesley Centre

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book or, in more serious instances, on an accident report form and Methodist Insurance advised.

When the church or church hall is let to outside organisations or individuals, they are told in writing 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 Health & Safety Officer.

### 3.2 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 either as a specific exercise or as 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 people who may be in the building can get out safely including, if necessary, the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage;
- to provide reasonable firefighting equipment;
- a check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire;
- a regular check that our firefighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company.

#### 3.2.1 Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

Church/ 9 L water (4)... left and right exit at front, upstairs gallery at back. (Spare in meter cupboard)

Church/ 6Kg CO2 (2).... organ, boiler room

Church/Hydro spray (1)...toilet area

Church/powder(1)....boiler room ( spare)

Wesley Centre/6L hydrospray (5), outer foyer, hall, corridor, top of front stairs, top of back stairs, Wesley Centre/6Kg CO2 (4).... kitchen, outer foyer, Main hall, upstairs corridor,  
Wesley Centre/9 L water(1)... Henshall Lounge  
Wesley Centre/ 6K powder (2).. boiler room ( one spare)  
Wesley Centre/ fire blanket is located in the kitchen area.  
The extinguishers are checked every month by the responsible person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged. The extinguishers noted above are checked and maintained annually by Procyon of Crewe

### **3.2.2 Fire alarm system**

Details of the fire alarm procedures are covered by a separate policy (see notice board).

The system is checked every six months by Procyon of Crewe.

In the event of a system malfunction or alarm activation then the nominated responsible person should be immediately informed.

### **3.2.3 Evacuation procedure**

For large services and concerts, where the congregation/audience exceeds 100, a competent person will supervise our procedures for stewarding/evacuation. These are as follows:

- 1 All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences and be clearly marked as fire exits using the 'Running Man' symbol;
- 2 A check must be made that all fire doors can be opened;
- 3 A trained steward must be allotted to each fire door and have responsibility for persons in a specific part of the church
- 4 Responsibility for using each fire extinguisher will be allotted to named and trained stewards;
- 5 In the event of an emergency (fire/bomb threat, etc.), an announcement to leave the building will be made;
- 6 Persons will assemble in the car park or in Chapel Street
- 7 The emergency services will be contacted immediately by a nominated person using a mobile phone

### **3.2.4 Evacuation drills**

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out annually. All employees and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

### **3.3 Electrical safety**

1. A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the responsible person;
2. Every year plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the responsible person to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed will be carried out.
3. Every year our portable electrical equipment will be examined by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience. Where appropriate a professional company will be asked to carry out tests on specific equipment. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of.
4. Every year a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation by the responsible person. Any defects will be reported to the Property Committee for action;
5. Every five years, the 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;
6. At intervals of not more than two and a half years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers;
7. It is our policy not to sell any second-hand electrical goods unless they have been inspected and tested by a suitably qualified person and a register of such equipment is maintained;
8. 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:  
(i) visually check all electrical equipment before use;

- (ii) report all faults immediately to the responsible person;
- (iii) do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
- (iv) 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;
- (v) electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods;
- (vi) flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

### **3.4 Gas equipment 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;

These arrangements are checked by the responsible person.

### **3.5 Hazardous substances**

The responsible person 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, we have safety arrangements 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']

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 for example:

Name of substance: Premium Dishwash

Hazard level: corrosive

Storage: in kitchen next to sanitizer

Protective clothing: Wear eye protection and gloves when handling

Name of substance: Tribac 100 sanitizer

Hazard level: low when diluted for use

Storage: in a locked box in the caretakers cupboard

Protective clothing: Wear eye protection when handling

Name of substance: Bleach

Hazard level: irritant and corrosive

Storage: in a locked box in the caretakers cupboard and in church basement

Protective clothing: Wear eye protection and gloves when handling

Small quantities of toilet cleaner, spray and wipe cleaner, liquid detergent etc are also stored in the caretaker's cupboard on high shelving away from children. Larger quantities are stored in the church basement.

No materials are stored in unmarked containers.

### **3.6 Safety of 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:

- Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use;
- 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;
- Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made;
- Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person;

- All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.

Ladders may only be used when other equipment such as tower scaffolds or mobile elevated work platforms cannot be used and for work of short duration provided they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties;

Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on;

The following items of plant and equipment are tested by a competent person in accordance with an inspection programme.

Lift in Wesley Centre -maintenance contract with Gartec Ltd  
Organ in Church - maintenance By Peter Spencer Ltd

A procedure for the safety of other plant and machinery will be maintained and will include a plant and equipment register, training requirements, training records and guidelines on the use of personal protective equipment.

### **3.7 Slips, trips and falls –condition of floors, steps and paths**

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

- all floors and stairs in the Church and Wesley Centre
- all paths and steps in the church grounds.

Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths. Any defects will be reported to the Property Committee who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

### **3.8 Lighting**

In order to ensure that the Church and Wesley centre is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every month by the responsible person to ensure that all lights in the church, hall and church grounds are working. Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported the responsible person, who will ensure that the bulbs are replaced following appropriate safety procedures.

### **3.9 Working at high levels**

The following areas are designated as high levels:

- Chapel entrance area and stairs
- Chapel Area ground floor (excluding the area under the balcony)
- Chapel balcony
- Chapel roof void
- Wesley Centre main staircase
- Wesley Centre Atrium
- Wesley Centre Balcony
- Wesley Centre hall ceiling void
- Wesley Centre first floor ceiling void
- All external areas above 3.5m

Approved contractors may work at high level. Only volunteers and employees included in the working at high level register may work at high level.

Volunteers and employees who may work at height will receive training and a training log will be held in the property manual.

When working at height a work sheet shall be in place that:

- Describes the task

- Provides names of persons carrying out the task
- Captures a review of the risks and measures to be taken to work safely
- Lists equipment to be used
- Lists materials to be used

The work sheet will be approved by the person responsible for controlling working at high level

Cleaning and lightweight maintenance which may include, for short durations, the use of ladders will not be subject to working at high level procedures. Such activities include for example, but are not limited to:

- Hanging displays
- Cleaning light fittings
- Changing bulbs
- Maintaining light fittings, starters, ballasts, diffusers
- Painting
- Installing and maintaining lightweight fixtures and fittings, curtain rails
- Hanging, replacing soft furnishings such as blinds and curtains
- Occasional work to other areas that may require the use of ladders and steps

Only persons who have received training in the use of ladders may use ladders, a log of training will be kept in the property manual.

### **3.10 Preparation and provision of food**

Food Hygiene Regulations apply to all food prepared and served in the Wesley Centre.

The only exception is for food prepared and cooked at home although we must ensure that such food is transferred under hygienic conditions and subsequently stored at an appropriate temperature before use.

We ensure that we follow the appropriate guidance governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs;

We ensure that all food handlers receive adequate supervision, instruction and training;

At least one person who supervises such preparation must hold a current certificate of food hygiene or equivalent. A list of all trained personnel is be found in the appendix to this policy. We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures;

Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be wiped and sanitised.

Food stuffs may only be prepared in the kitchen area

We ensure that all external hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures and are advised to have the appropriate insurance.

#### **3.10.1 Cleaning and maintenance**

The kitchen floor is given a thorough disinfection weekly and all other external surfaces sanitized. The internal surfaces of refrigerators are cleaned at least 3 monthly and storage cupboards cleaned on at least an annual basis. Any surplus or out of date materials are disposed of.

The temperature in the middle shelf of refrigerators/freezers are recorded in the log book for that purpose at least monthly. The thermometer should be retained in the equipment at all times.

### **3.11 Manual handling – lifting, carrying and moving loads**

1. Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable;
2. 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 possible;
3. The necessary training will be given to all those employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling;

4. Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks.

### **3.12 Display screen equipment**

Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer workstations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible.

The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- \_ stability and legibility of the screen;
- \_ contrast and brightness of the screen;
- \_ tilt and swivel of the screen;
- \_ suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs;
- \_ the work station environment;
- \_ the user-friendliness of the software.

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen. Where necessary, risk assessments will be carried out by the responsible person.

### **3.13 Hazardous buildings/glazing**

1. 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 3 months by the responsible person;
2. Any defects noted are immediately reported to the Property Committee and the procedures put in hand for repairs;
3. Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out;
4. A check is made of any asbestos in the building by a competent person noting its location, type and condition. Where necessary, asbestos will be removed by a licensed contractor. Information regarding any asbestos remaining in the building is given to all contractors and anyone else who may be affected;
5. 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 of a safety material or is protected against breakage.

### **3.14 Child protection**

A separate safeguarding policy is available

A statement upholding our procedures will be made at least annually at Church Council meetings and be suitably recorded. A permanent record will be maintained of all accidents involving children or vulnerable adults.

### **3.15 Personal safety**

Risk assessments will be undertaken to assess the risks to persons working alone in the church, travelling to and from church, accepting persons into their homes, and handling cash and other valuables. Procedures will be documented

### **3.16 Risk assessments/activities**

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises, and all ongoing activities that carry a significant risk, at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Actions will be taken to reduce risk. This process will be documented using the form provided by Methodist Insurance.

Risk assessments will, as necessary, will be carried out on all 'one off' hazardous activities arranged by the church and its internal organisations. These might include fun days and fairs, sponsored walks, visits and outings, erection of temporary staging etc.

### **3.17 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:

1. have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same;
2. produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained;
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. 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;
6. 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.

### **3.18 Information and enforcement**

Environmental Health Service Information:

Contact: Cheshire East Council, Environmental services  
<tel:03001235015>

Employment Medical Advisory Service

Contact: office [@medicaladvisoryservice.org.uk](mailto:office@medicaladvisoryservice.org.uk)  
Tel:02089958503

### **3.19 Health and Safety Awareness**

A copy of the HSE poster '*Health and Safety Law – what you should know*' is displayed in the ground floor corridor.

## Appendix

The current personnel specifically referred to in this policy are:

Property Committee: **Revd Kim Stilwell (Chair), Robert Glassonbury (Secretary), Patrick Darnes, Peter Mason, Tom Cooke, David Priaux (Treasurer).**

Health & Safety Officer: **Peter Mason**

Property Steward/Secretary: **Robert Glassonbury**

Buildings Manager: **Tom Cooke**

Food Hygiene: **Barbara Glassonbury**

**Individuals trained for food preparation:**

[ to be added later ]

\*\*\*\*\*This list will be kept current and is not part of the formal policy \*\*\*\*\*