**NUNEATON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

 **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

**Revised SEPTEMBER 2023**

**NOTE TO ALL MEMBERS, USERS OF THE BUILDING AND CONTRACTORS:**

The success of this policy will depend on your cooperation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role in the overall arrangements for health and safety.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

**Aim**

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 of members of our congregation, visitors and others who may use the church, or any other building for which we are responsible.

This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

**Objectives**

* provide conditions and systems for all which prevent any danger to health.

This requires that risk assessments are carried out as appropriate to enable hazards and risks to be identified and to enable the standards of safety to be adapted and enforced;

* ensure that all plant and equipment is maintained properly and that none will be used knowingly when it presents any risks to the safety of church members, other users of the buildings and the public;
* provide means of access and egress which are safe and without risks to health;
* provide comprehensive information, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health and safety of all users of the buildings
* ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all church members, volunteers and members of the public are under continuous review;
* ensure arrangements are made for the safe storage, handling and transport of articles and substances;
* ensure that the church will have, and maintain, up-to-date fire procedures and documentation and that all church members and users of the building are familiar with them;
* promote individual responsibility for health and safety at all levels.

The Elders accept overall responsibility for implementing the church’s health and Safety Policy

We will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective.

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We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.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 member of the church 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.

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Church Meeting has overall responsibility** for the policies and procedures in the church;

**Elders have the overall responsibility** for implementing our policy and reporting to the Church Meeting;

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 testsAny 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

**The Elders also have day-to-day responsibility** for implementing our policy.

They will ensure that:

* All church members and users of the buildings 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 are 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 church members and users of the buildings 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 activities 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 members or volunteers of known hazards
* 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.

ARRANGEMENTS

(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 all users of the buildings, members of the congregation, visitors, and contractors

**Risk assessments** will be reviewed regularly and at least once a year with a view to ensuring that the control measures have been, and remain, effective.

The Church Elders will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out,

**First Aid**

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including first aid boxes located in:

Bracher Kitchen

Boswell Kitchen

Office

Elsie Baker Room

Sanctuary on table by piano

Little Chapel

**Accident Reporting**

We will record details of accidents.

When appropriate we will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of certain accidents to church members, volunteers, and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

Our accident books are located in:

Bracher Kitchen

Boswell Kitchen

Little Chapel

**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 that they remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

**Contractors**

If we employ contractors, we make sure that they have their own health & 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 Church Office

SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS

**Asbestos**

Following a thorough inspection within the scope of a management survey (18th July 2018) there was one suspect material identified with this being a redundant boiler in the cellar, presumed to house asbestos textile gaskets.

Access to the cellar is restricted and the following notice displayed

CAUTION

POTENTIAL HAZARD

NO ENTRY

For

UNAUTHORISED

PERSONS

Redundant boiler presumed to house asbestos textile gaskets.

It is not a legal requirement that the removal or any work that is likely to disturb the products above to be undertaken by a licensed contractor. However, it must be undertaken in accordance with the Control of Asbestos regulations 2012

We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

**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. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing.

**Cleaning**

The church, halls and toilets are cleaned weekly by professional cleaners

**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.

**Electricity**

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine, and portable appliance is maintained to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced.

The fixed electrical installations in the church will be inspected and tested on a 5-yearly basis by approved electrical contractors and any maintenance to prevent danger will be carried out;

Full Electrical inspection carried out 2019 – next due 2024

We will keep records of the checks made where appropriate.

Although PAT testing is not a legal requirement we arrange for testing at appropriate intervals.

Hirers must ensure that any electrical appliances brought onto the Premises are safe, in good working order, are PAT certified and used in a safe manner

**Events and letting**

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.

All hirers are required comply with all our standard conditions of hire.

The Hirer is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of all persons entering/using the Premises and its grounds in connection with the Permitted Use (whether formally invited or not) during the Hire period.

**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 regularly

Extinguishers are checked annually for conformity under contract with Chubb

**Food**

We will ensure that on those occasions when we prepare food, we use a clean and disinfected 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.

**Gas**

Gas heaters and boilers to be maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is a Corgi registered gas installer. Any necessary work required for safety to be implemented immediately. We will keep records of the checks made.

Vulcana gas heaters annual check in September 2023

Domestic gas boilers last serviced August 2023

**Hazardous Substances**

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural products. We will ensure that these are stored, used, and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers’ instructions, taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

**Lighting I**

in order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, regular inspections to be carried out ensuring that all lights in church, hall and carparking area are working and are replaced as necessary. The necessary safety precautions will be followed for replacing bulbs at high levels.

**Manual Handling**

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

**Slips and Trips**

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or 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 handrails or lighting) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks we make. We will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

**Smoking**

Smoking and vaping are not permitted on Church premises

**Water**

Water system flushed through: all taps to be run for at least at least 5 mins weekly; all toilets to be flushed at least twice weekly

**Working Alone**

Our policy is that wherever possible tasks in the church and hall should be done in the company of at least one other. This would especially apply after dark.

**Work Equipment**

Any work equipment (including any hand tools) we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained.

**Working at Height**

Where possible, we will try to avoid the need for 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.

Only approved contractors or competent volunteers may work at high levels, subject to the necessary safety provisions being in place.