

Goodwood Evangelical Church

Health & Safety Policy

Date of policy: January 2023

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 of any employee, and all those who may use the church building and its grounds. This will be in accordance with any relevant statutory provisions where they apply. The Elders and York Street Gospel Hall Trust Trustees who are members at Goodwood accept overall responsibility for this. We will endeavour to make sure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make will have due regard for the policy. We will appoint a member of the church 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 We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.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 those who use the church building to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be brought to the attention of volunteers*. We will try to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays his or her part in its implementation. Further detail about arrangements for managing health and safety is set out in this document. A hard copy of it will be kept in the church with electronic access also available.

*Throughout this document 'volunteers' refers, in the main, to all those responsible for running activities in the church building.

1. Organisation and responsibilities

The Elders are responsible for implementing our policy

They are: Anthony Groom, Geoff Smith and Stephen Taylor

The member of the Elders with overall responsibility for implementing our policy is: Anthony Groom

They will ensure that:

- The standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained
- Where necessary, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained
- When any hazards are reported to them they are rectified
- Only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests
- The accidents that are recorded are reviewed periodically
- In the event of a serious accident or incident, it is investigated and reported to the appropriate authority.
- Relevant health and safety documents and records are kept up to date
- They keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church
- Any employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities
- Adequate information and training are provided for those that need it
- Where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger

2. Any employees and volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while engaged in church activities on the premises.

They will ensure that they:

- Read this policy and understand what is required of them
- Complete their activity taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others
- Comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures
- Report any accident, hazard, defect or damage
- Warn any new employees or volunteers of known hazards
- Attend any training, if it is required, to enable them to carry out activities of the church safely
- Do not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so

Arrangements

This section sets out our arrangements for managing health and safety and dealing with specific risks.

Competent Assistance

Where necessary, we will consult with someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations. Where a consultation is made, we will record the details.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments have been carried out to identify what we need to do to ameliorate any hazards. Findings have been recorded and any necessary precautions implemented. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

Information and Training

We will provide any necessary information and training for any 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.

- For the main meetings of the church the person on the door rota will be responsible for ensuring that basic first aid is administered and that 999 is called if appropriate. They themselves need not be the person to do these things, but they should ensure that they are done. Others present, particularly those who have had first aid training may take responsibility.
- For other meetings and activities, a person should be appointed where possible to take charge of first aid and to call 999 if necessary.
- Any employees and the person responsible for first-aid at any meeting should know where the first-aid equipment is kept.
- Our first aid box is located in: The cupboard identified in the kitchen
- Currently the Church Support Team are responsible for keeping the first aid equipment well stocked.
- Any accidents or incidents that require first aid should be recorded in the accident book and serious accidents or incidents reported to one of the elders.

HSE says an organisation of our size (workplace with fewer than 25 employees and non-hazardous activities) does not need a first aid trained person, but we should have someone who is appointed to be responsible.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf> (accessed 15/12/22)

Accident Reporting

We will keep an accident book and record details therein. We will report to the enforcing authority (e.g. HSE) and keep records of certain accidents to employees, volunteers and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). Our Accident Book is kept with the First Aid Equipment in the cupboard. There is also a book of forms for RIDDOR. See the following for examples of reportable incidents:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/employer/reporting-incidents-involving-volunteers.htm> (accessed 18/1/23)

Monitoring

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate.

Contractors

If we employ contractors, we will 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. If they do not have their own policies and insurance then they must follow our health and safety policy and be covered by our insurance.

Record Keeping

Our Health and Safety Risk Assessments, records and other documents are kept electronically with access to all those who require it.

Asbestos

We are not aware of asbestos in the building. A recent survey (2021) found no asbestos when the ceiling in the main hall was replaced. In the event of further major works we will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if so, assess any risk from it. We will then implement any 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 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.

Church grounds

We will ensure that boundary walls, gates and paths 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.

Construction Work

Where maintenance and refurbishment work is planned for our church building, we will identify in consultation with any contractor what is needed to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts.

Display Screen Equipment

Where any employee or volunteer regularly uses computers daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more we will analyse workstations to identify precautions, implementing these as necessary. These will include, encouraging breaks after each hour of working in front of a screen and adjustment to ensure the person is sitting comfortably. We will also provide information, training, eye/eyesight tests (on request) and special spectacles if needed.

Electricity

HSE states that the law requires us to ensure electrical equipment is maintained in order to prevent danger – it doesn't state what needs to be done or how often, but does give suggestions. A Portable Appliance Test (PAT) may be needed, but see the HSE document 'Maintaining portable electric equipment in low-risk environments' (INDG236(rev3), published 09/13) for further advice on checking and PAT.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.htm>

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliance is 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.

We will assess the frequency of checks and the need for PAT in our Risk Assessments.

Events

Where we intend to hold large or unusual services or events, we will identify any additional precautions that are necessary and implement these, beyond those in the Church Building Risk Assessment.

Fire

The Church Building Risk Assessment contains the following section on fire.

1. Waste from bins is regularly emptied
2. Only relatively small stocks of flammable materials are stored.
3. Exit routes are kept clear at all times
4. The door to the main hall or the bottom hall is kept unlocked during main meetings. The door to the bottom hall can be unbolted and unlocked without a key. Some activities require the front door to be locked for security. Those in charge need to be aware of the need to unlock at a moment's notice.
5. Portable heaters are kept away from flammable materials and are well maintained.
6. Fire extinguishers and fire blanket are regularly maintained
7. There is normally someone available with a mobile phone to call the fire service. Alternatively, there are lots of neighboring homes that will give phone support.
8. The hall can be evacuated quickly in the event of an emergency and people can gather safely some distance from the building e.g. bottom of Goodwood Crescent.

Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural products and 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.

Heating Systems

We will ensure that the gas heating system is 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.

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.

Preparation of Food

We will ensure the following when preparing food:

- Good hygiene practices are adopted when preparing food - hand-washing facilities are provided
- The kitchen is kept clean, well maintained and in good condition
- Food preparation surfaces are in good condition, easy to clean and disinfected

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers
- Attention is paid to any 'use-by' dates
- Raw and ready-to-eat food is stored properly
- Food is cooked and prepared properly
- Food is covered to help protect it from bacteria and prevent contamination where appropriate
- Waste is disposed of in a suitable manner

Current advice about food safety in our kind of setting can be found at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events> (accessed 15/12/22)

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.

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 at Height

When working at height the following procedure should be followed:

- When using step ladders two people always present in the building OR if only one person then someone should know that you are working alone at height.
- When large step ladders used one person always holds bottom of the ladder to ensure stability.
- Care is used when climbing and dismounting from ladders e.g. 3 point contact (one hand, two feet, etc.)
- The top 3 rungs are not used unless there is a suitable handhold
- Care is used when working on the ladder to avoid overreach and to ensure suitable handholds
- Ladders are inspected for damage before and after use.