

Sidespeople Duties and Responsibilities

SIDESPEOPLE are the Churchwardens' assistants. "Sidesman" is an ancient position in the Church of England. The Canon of the Church of England says the duty of Sidespeople is "to promote the cause of true religion in the parish and to assist the Churchwardens in the discharge of their duties in maintaining order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially in the time of divine service".

SERVICES In practice, Sidespeople chiefly help the Churchwardens before, during and after worship by welcoming people as they enter the church, giving out hymn and service books, taking the collection, counting the collection and tidying up and putting everything back in its place after the service. They should keep a particular look out for new people and visitors to make sure they know their way around the church, understand the form of the service and introduce them to a few regular members of the congregation.

ROTA There should be an agreed rota for the year ahead. People volunteer for this role and the list of Sidespeople has to be approved and annually elected at the Annual Parochial Meeting, or in between APMs by the PCC. Sidespeople must be on the Electoral Roll, and to be on the Roll you have to be over 16 and baptised.

YOUNG HELPERS It is good for Children and young people to share in some duties such as giving out books and taking up the Collection and may do so provided they are overseen by an appointed sidesperson. This is a good way of encouraging children, young people or whole families to take an active part in helping with the service.

SAFETY There are two significant safety matters adult sides people have responsibly for.

FIRE

- Ensure the church building doors are unlocked at least 45 minutes before start of a service as means of escape in the event of fire.
- A check should be made to ensure all exits are clear and no rubbish or other form of blockage present.
- Fire extinguishers are present and in good order
- In the event of fire ensure safe orderly evacuation of the congregation including disabled and carers.
- Carry out and record evacuation exercises as determined by the Health & Safety officer and Sexton
- Immediately a fire incident occurs **Dial 999** and explain to Fire Control what has happened and give the location - Postcode BN8 4JZ - **Bravo November 8 4 Juliet Zulu**

COUNTERTERRORISM

Under new Protect Duty legislation all public buildings must take steps to protect the public and staff against the risk of any form of terrorist act however unlikely such an incident might seem. The final form of the legislation has yet to be passed by Parliament but once it has been published our particular level of responsibility can be added to this document.

Reviewed January 2025