

Magor Baptist Church

Charity No: 1136850

Health & Safety and Fire Precautions Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Magor Baptist church policy is to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our employees, volunteers, church members, visitors and others who may use the church, grounds or any other building we are responsible for.

This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply. The Trustees accept their responsibility for this. The Trustees will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make will have due regard for it.

We will appoint a member of the Diaconate 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 We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid as appropriate.

It is the duty of each employee and volunteer to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be brought to their attention. We will attempt to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays their part in its implementation.

2. LEGAL DUTIES

Legislation (The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974)¹ applies when a Church is an employer to at least one paid employee. Having fewer than five employees, we are not legally required to have a written Health & Safety policy however have chosen to produce one.

The church has a responsibility to consult with outside organisations using our premises on health and safety matters including fire precautions, so that it is clear where the responsibility lies. The church is responsible for the safety of the premises and the organisation responsible for the conduct of its own operations.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) consider it good practice to provide volunteers with the same level of health and safety protection as they would in an employer / employee relationship.

The Act says that you must do what is 'reasonably practicable' to ensure the health and safety of all who come, or are likely to come, onto church premises, even if they are trespassing.

The church will give attention to the risks and circumstances which may exist, the precautions that are already in place and the resources available.

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The church will:

- Display the Health and Safety Law poster for employees or distribute the leaflet
- Notify certain types of injuries and accidents
- Display a current certificate as required by the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998
- Conduct a Health and Safety and Fire Precaution risk assessment to identify potential hazards

It is not only employers who have legal duties. Employees are also specifically legally obliged to accept the health and safety responsibilities as outlined in the written Health and Safety policy. It is expected that the minister will comply with the church's Health and Safety policy being one of the Charity Trustees responsible for ensuring this it is followed.

Guidance - Health & Safety Law Poster -

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/lawposter.htm>

3. EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE

The certificate of insurance for Employers Liability Insurance (at least £5 million) to insure against liability for injury or disease to our employee(s), including Ministers, is displayed in the vestibule.

It is recommended the certificate is retained for *at least* 40 years after it has expired as claims for illness can be made many years later.

Guidance - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.pdf>

4. ENFORCING THE LAW

The local authority, together with the Health and Safety Executive, have the legal obligation to enforce health and safety regulations and have the right to come onto church premises which are 'places of work' to undertake inspections.

Should an enforcement notice be served; it will set out work or action to be taken and, have the power in extreme situations to issue a prohibition order to prevent the premises from being used until the necessary work has been conducted.

5. THE HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

We have a legal duty to assess the risks that exist on our premises and to reduce them as far as reasonably practicable. Any risk which cannot be entirely removed will be reduced until it can be described as a small risk.

The church will:

- identify the hazard(s)

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- decide who might be harmed, and how
- consider the likelihood and severity of hazards
- identify existing precautions and decide whether they are adequate or whether more should be done to overcome the hazard
- record the full findings of the risk assessment
- review the assessment periodically

A risk assessment will be completed, aiming to incorporate everyone who uses our building however infrequent, to identify what is required to comply with health and safety law. Our findings will be recorded and any necessary precautions implemented. The risk assessments will be reviewed periodically and revised appropriately according to the risks.

It should be noted that any meetings or events by a person or group from outside the church, should undertake their own risk assessment prior to using our premises.

The fabric of the building will be regularly inspected to ensure it is safe. Defects identified will be repaired as soon as is practicable. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made, including glazing.

Suitable precautions will be implemented to prevent slips or trips. Periodic checks will be conducted 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.

Special attention will be paid to young children and adults at risk, anyone with a disability or mobility issue and to lone workers. In legal terms there is a higher level of duty where the danger is known to attract children, either as trespassers or otherwise.

The grounds and boundary walls and gates will be kept in good repair. Should trees become overgrown and unmanageable, they will be inspected by a competent person and necessary work undertaken to make them safe.

Should a large event, including fundraising event or service take place, precautions may be identified and necessary steps taken to implement these.

The baptistery should also be included in routine risk assessments. Consideration should be given to:

- potential danger if using electrical items in or around the water
- risk of injury to individuals who are assisting the baptismal candidate, this should be assessed from case to case
- potential slipping on a wet surface

Guidance - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>

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6. FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS RISK ASSESSMENT

There is now a greater emphasis on fire prevention since the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order came into effect on 1st October 2006. This Order requires fire precautions to be put in place 'where necessary' to the extent that they are reasonable and practicable in the circumstances. The Charity Trustees will be responsible, they must:

- conduct a fire risk assessment identifying any dangers and risks
- consider who may be especially at risk to get rid of or reduce the risk from fire as far as is reasonable possible
- provide general fire precautions to deal with any possible risk left
- take measures to make sure there is protection if flammable materials are used or stored
- create a plan to deal with any emergency
- review findings where necessary

A specific fire risk assessment will be completed regularly to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and take in the event of a fire. The findings will be recorded, with necessary precautions implemented. These will be reviewed periodically and revised should they be no longer valid.

The risk assessment will pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as a disability or mobility issue, young children and adults at risk and lone workers. It will help to identify risks that can be removed or reduced and to decide the nature and extent of the general fire precautions that need to be taken to protect people against the fire risks that remain.

Full findings of the assessment will be recorded, including:

- probable causes of fire
- ways in which the risk of fire occurring and spreading can be minimized
- means of fighting fire
- fire detection and warning
- emergency routes and exits
- information on fire precautions
- maintenance and testing of fire precautions.

Responsibility for enforcement of these rules is with the local fire and rescue service authority who will conduct regular inspections with priority going to those premises presenting most risk to the community.

It is recommended that a fire safety practice be conducted annually. It is important that fire marshals (and deputies) are appointed and that appropriate training has been received. Hi-Viz jackets must be worn on evacuation of the premises.

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It will be expected that anyone on the church premises at the time of the evacuation will vacate the building and proceed to the fire assembly point(s) where a head count will take place to ensure all have evacuated safely.

The assembly points are:

1. Outside Magor Post Office (should the back entrance be impinged)
2. The rear car park (should the front entrance be impinged)

Guidance - [Check your fire safety responsibilities under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 \(accessible\)](#) - GOV.UK

[Fire safety in the workplace: Who's responsible](#) - GOV.UK/

[Fire Safety Act 2021 \[HTML\]](#) | GOV.WALES

[Fire safety risk assessment: small and medium places of assembly](#) - GOV.UK

7. RECORDING AND REPORTING ACCIDENTS

All accidents that occur on church premises, however small, must be recorded in the accident book (*although churches are not legally obliged to have an accident book unless they have ten or more employees*). The accident book must comply with the Data Protection Act, with all personal information being protected with the Act. Once the information is recorded, the page should be removed and passed to the responsible person for H&S (Chris Payne) then stored securely to ensure the information remains private.

The accident book is situated in kitchen.

The requirement by the enforcing authority RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences) 2013 is to report certain accidents of employees, volunteers, and members of the public. If an accident results in death, hospitalisation, an inability to work for seven days or more or if there is a dangerous occurrence which could have caused a reportable injury then seek advice from the local environmental health department.

Guidance - [RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations](#) - HSE

8. TRAINING AND CONSULTATION

The church is legally obliged to provide necessary information and training to our employees and volunteers. This will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all those who use the premises.

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If we employ contractors, it is expected that they have their own Health and Safety policy and Public and Employers Liability Insurance (copies of relevant documents may be requested to be seen). They should also conduct their own risk assessment.

A record of the training and information provided will be retained for future reference.

Guidance - [hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg345.pdf](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg345.pdf)

9. FIRST AID

The minimum first aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first aid box
- an appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements.

The person who takes charge when someone is injured or falls ill, including calling an ambulance if required, and who looks after the first aid equipment is the 'appointed person(s)' or 'First Aider(s)'. They should not attempt to give first aid for which they have not been trained.

There are three First Aid Boxes, located:

1. Kitchen
2. Kitchen in the school room
3. Under the sink in the upstairs corridor

The 'First Aiders' are: Beverley Davies, Anne Thomas, and Suzie Roberts

It may be appropriate to consider whether church crèche supervisors or other individuals should be qualified first aiders.

10. RESUSCITATION, AUTOMATED DEFIBRILLATORS AND THE LAW

A Defibrillator is situated (diagonally right) opposite the church for public use. We have volunteers who have been trained by the St John Ambulance service to use the defibrillator. (As above for First Aiders)

There is guidance produced by the Resuscitation Council which aims to clarify the obligations and responsibilities of people who attempt the resuscitation of anyone suffering a suspected sudden cardiac arrest, and to provide guidance for organisations that are contemplating providing life-saving equipment and training for those who might use it.

Guidance: [Publication: CPR, AEDs and the law | Resuscitation Council UK](#)

11. LIGHTNING STRIKES

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It should be noted that The Baptist Insurance Company publishes the following advice on its website:

‘A single bolt of lightning hitting a church can damage the fabric of the building as well as causing fires which can cause massive amounts of damage to the church and its roof. The huge surge of electrical energy hitting the church can cause wires in the building to burn out putting computers, electric organs, alarm systems, and audio-visual equipment at risk. It is not possible to completely remove the risk of lightning strikes, but you can help to protect your church by’:

- Have lightning protection fitted
- Keep lightning conductors properly maintained
- Have the church’s lightning conductor inspected at least every four years
- Install surge protection equipment to protect the church’s electrical equipment

Any work on the church’s lightning protection system should be conducted by a competent contractor such as a member of the Association of Technical Lightning and Access Specialists.

12. ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION INSPECTIONS

Electrical installations (which have become more rigorous) must be checked from time to time to ensure that they are safe. Regard should be taken to the recommended inspection frequencies and obtain independent professional advice where and when necessary.

	Routine Check	Maximum period between inspection and testing
Residential Property	Annually	5 years
Churches	Annually	5 years
Where there is a public entertainment licence	Annually	3 years

For Electrical Installation Inspections in Wales, the Renting Homes (Wales) Act introduced requirements on Landlords.

Where a church, such as ours, lets out properties there are new guidelines which came into force on 1st December 2022. (See Guideline Leaflets PM07 Manse Occupancy under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 and PM08 Letting a Manse in Wales).

Guidance - [Fitness of homes for human habitation: guidance for landlords \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

[Electrical safety and you: A brief guide \(INDG231\(rev1\)\)](#)

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13. PORTABLE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Visual inspection and electrical test should be conducted regularly to ensure the safety of portable electrical items. Visitors are responsible for the safe operation of their own electrical equipment brought onto church premises.

There are suggested inspection and testing intervals in the leaflet 'HSE leaflet Maintaining Portable Electrical Equipment in Offices and other Low-risk Environments.'

Guidance - [Maintaining portable electrical equipment in low-risk environments \(INDG236\(rev2\)\)](#)

14. GAS INSTALLATIONS

The Manse, although may be used by the Minister as a place of work, will for all purposes be classified as domestic premises, therefore in legal terms it will not be subject to the more stringent requirements of health and safety law.

The church, however, should comply with the regulations which apply to landlords regarding the safety of gas installations. The HSE advise all gas consumers to have appliances checked for safety at least every 12 months by a Gas Safe registered engineer, who will be able to offer further advice.

Guidance - [INDG238 Gas appliances. Get them checked Keep them safe](#)
[INDG285 Landlords](#)

15. LONE WORKING

Please see our separate 'Lone Working Policy' (available on the church website) dated May 2025

This policy also incorporates working at height.

16. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Domestic cleaning materials are stored in a locked cupboard (locked at a height to prevent small children access), these items must be disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and all necessary precautions must be taken.

Guidance - [Hazardous substances at work: A brief guide to COSHH INDG136\(rev5\)](#)

17. ASBESTOS

A comprehensive in-depth Asbestos survey was conducted by Enquin Environmental Limited (Asbestos Consultants) in September 2023. Asbestos was identified in various parts of the building (classified as low risk). Full details are in the report

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provided; this document is available and should be checked if/when any building work takes place. There is an obligation to monitor its condition, put control measures in place and notify persons who may be at risk.

There is further information in Guidelines Leaflet L11 Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012.

It is important to remember that, for the purposes of these regulations, manses are not classed as domestic premises and therefore these regulations also apply to manses.

18. WORKING WITH VISUAL DISPLAY SCREEN (VDUs)

Health issues associated with the use of VDU (Visual display screen). These include:

- repetitive strain injury or 'RSI'
- back ache
- fatigue and stress
- temporary eye strain (but not eye damage) and headaches.

The Display Screen Regulations require you to:

- analyse workstations to assess and reduce risks.
- ensure that workstations meet specified minimum requirements.
- plan work activities so that they include breaks or changes of activity.
- provide eye and eyesight tests on request, and special glasses if needed.
- provide information and training.

Guidance - [Working with display screen equipment \(DSE\)](#)

19. WELFARE AT WORK

As an employer, we are required 'so far as is reasonably practicable' to provide adequate and appropriate welfare facilities for our employees. 'Welfare facilities' are those that are necessary for their well-being, such as toilet and washing facilities, drinking water, lighting, and appropriate temperature etc.

Guidance – [Welfare at work - Guidance for employers on welfare provisions](#)

20. MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling is the term used for lifting items safely. It is important, particularly if chairs or other equipment are moved regularly.

Guidance – [indg143](#)

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21. LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE

The spread of the legionella bacteria should and can be prevented by:

- (a) avoiding water temperatures between 20°C and 45°C - water temperature is a particularly key factor in controlling the risks
- (b) avoiding water stagnation, which may encourage the growth of biofilm
- (c) avoiding the use of materials in the system that can harbour or provide nutrients for bacteria and other organisms
- (d) keeping the system clean to avoid the build-up of sediments which may harbour bacteria (and provide a nutrient source for them)
- (e) the use of a suitable water treatment programme where it is appropriate and safe to do so
- (f) ensuring that the system operates safely and correctly and is well maintained

Guidance - [Legionella and Legionnaires' disease - HSE](#)

22. CONSTRUCTION DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS – THE MANSE

If work is to be conducted on the Manse, reference should be made to the Guidelines Leaflet PC05 Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

23. GOVERNMENT COUNTER TERRORISM ADVICE

The Government guidance on increasing the protection of crowded places from a terrorist attack can be found here: <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>

There is a helpful video explanation on Martyn's Law on the BUGB website. More guidance on Martyn's Law will be published in due course however the requirements for churches are not expected to be onerous and will not be implemented until 2027 at the earliest.

24. PANDEMICS

As a Church, we need to be prepared for issues that arise in the event of a pandemic re-occurring. The Government recognises the role which churches have in supporting those that are affected by an outbreak. If a pandemic occurs, we are required to take steps to ensure that our services and activities do not contribute to the spread of the virus.

25. SMOKE-FREE LEGISLATION AND CHURCH BUILDINGS

Smoking is not permitted inside the church building, however, is permitted in a designated area outside. All litter, including ash must be disposed of legally. Fines

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may be imposed by the Local Authority to individuals who breach in smoke-free buildings or vehicles.

'No Smoking' signs are required to be displayed in smoke-free premises and vehicles, and the law is enforced by Local Authorities. Failure to comply with the law is an offence. Churches need to comply with the signage requirements.

In March 2021 changes were introduced which extended the smoke-free requirements to more places and settings in Wales (including e.g. hospital grounds, school grounds, public playgrounds, and child-minding settings).

Guidance - [Smoke-free law: guidance on the changes from March 2021 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

26. FOOD HYGIENE & ALLERGEN LABELLING

Most local authorities (Environmental Health Department) can offer advice on food hygiene regulations and supply relevant guidance leaflets; they can also highlight appropriate training courses. The legal requirements will vary depending on the extent to which food is overseen on your premises and how often activities include an element of catering. Food hygiene regulations apply whether or not a charge is made for refreshments. Some churches need to register with their local Environmental Health Department.

Guidance - [Providing food at community and charity events | Food Standards Agency](#)

[Food safety and hygiene | Food Standards Agency](#)

Guidance - [Allergen Labelling](#)

[Allergen labelling changes for prepacked for direct sale \(PPDS\) food | Food Standards Agency](#)

[Registering as a food business \(food banks and charities\) | Food Standards Agency](#)

[Food allergen labelling and information requirements technical guidance: Introduction | Food Standards Agency](#)

[Providing food at community and charity events | Food Standards Agency](#)