

Our Health and Safety Policy

V 8 – July 2020

The Health and Safety Executive have advised that it is good practice for volunteers to be provided with the same level of health and safety training and protection as if they were employees. This means that churches should follow exactly the same regulations to ensure the health and safety of volunteers and other persons using the church as if they were employees.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

The policy is in three sections:

Section A – General statement of policy;

Section B – Organisation and responsibilities;

Section C – Arrangements.

**The Mint Methodist Church
Fore Street, Exeter, Devon
EX4 3AT**

Date **July 2020**

Review date **July 2022**

To all employees, voluntary helpers and contractors:

The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role in it and the overall arrangements for health and safety while you are on the Mint premises for whatever reason.

A 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 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 included on the agenda for all meetings of the Church Council and discussed at all Property Committee meetings.

Employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Signed  (Rev Steve Santry)

Date 24th July 2020

(Proposed review date: July 2022)

B Organisation and responsibilities

1 Responsibility of the Church Council

The Church Council as Managing Trustees have overall responsibility for health and safety. They 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 Responsibility of Property Officers and Property Committee

Those persons appointed to these roles and onto the committee carry responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements as outlined in this policy. The responsibility of the persons 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** ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place;
- 4** ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained;
- 5** ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is specifically stated as being required;
- 6** ensure that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training;
- 7** ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.
- 8** ensure the church premises are clean and tidy;
- 9** ensure the church grounds are properly maintained including the safety of monuments, tombstones and trees;
- 10** ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained;

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 on the 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 stated as being 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.

4 Responsible Persons

The schedule below identifies those principally responsible for safety in the fields identified:

Accident book/Accident reporting (1)	Mike Pillidge (Property Secretary)
Fire Protection (2.1, 2.2, 2.3)	David Price (Fire Officer)
Portable Electrical Appliances (3.0) Fixed Electrical Systems (3.4)	<i>No individual currently in place – refer to Property Team</i>
Asbestos Register (13.4)	Mike Pillidge (Property Secretary)
Plant Machinery and Fixed Equipment (4), (6)	Alan Bullock (Property Team) John White (Property Team) Mike Pillidge (Property Secretary)
Buildings: External Fabric (7.2, 13)	Alan Bullock (Property Team) John White (Property Team)
Buildings: Internal Fabric (7.1, 13)	Alan Bullock (Property Team) Peter Coleman (Property Team)
Working at high levels (9)	Alan Bullock (Property Team) John White (Property Team)
Internal Floors and Steps (7)	Chris Ware (Facilitator)
Health and Safety Audit	Elizabeth Gayton (Church Council Secretary) Mike Pillidge (Property Secretary)
Safeguarding (14)	Peter Coleman (Safeguarding Officer)

C 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 employees, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors. Formal review of policy implementation will include an annual health and safety audit carried out by the responsible persons and reported to the Church Council.

0 COVID-19: SPECIAL PROVISIONS

At present decisions by the Managing Trustees on opening and operating the premises are subject to restrictions intended to control the coronavirus pandemic; these vary over time. The requirements in force from government and from the Methodist Connexion, the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes and Methodist Insurance Ltd are accessible via links from <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/property/coronavirus-guidance-for-property/> . Data from these sources will be used from time to time by the Managing Trustees to develop supplementary rules; the current version of such documentation shall over-ride the arrangements set out in this Policy in the event of conflict.

1 Accidents and first aid

First Aid boxes are located as follows, and are regularly checked and re-stocked by a qualified person:

- 1 At the Reception Servery
- 2 Link Corridor rear of Worship Area
- 3 Wesley Room
- 4 Wesley Kitchen
- 5 Epworth Room
- 6 Main Kitchen
- 7 Priory Room Servery
- 8 Rowe Landing outside Worship Area balcony door
- 9 Rowe Hall
- 10 Mandela Servery
- 11 Old School Room

There are at present no qualified first-aiders. In the event of non-trivial accidents or illness the emergency services shall be called.

ALL accidents and incidents must be entered in the accident book held at the Reception Desk. Full details need to be given to enable proper analysis and, if necessary, statutory reporting to be made. The accident records are regularly reviewed by the Responsible Person, analysed and reported to the Managing Trustees. Where rooms are let to outside organisations, these users must be advised in writing that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book.

Note the following injuries are reportable by the Responsible Person under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when they result from a work-related accident (note - the term 'worker' includes employees and volunteers):

- The death of any person (Reg 6)
- Specified Injuries to workers (Reg 4)
- Injuries to workers which result in their incapacitation for more than 7 days (Reg 4)

- Injuries to non-workers which result in them being taken directly to hospital for treatment, or specified injuries to non-workers which occur on hospital premises. (Reg 5)

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 to carry out on a regular basis:

- an assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings and the risks to our neighbours. This is carried out by Westcountry Fire Protection Ltd on behalf of the Church Council and in liaison with the Responsible Person;
- 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;
- provision and maintenance of reasonable firefighting equipment;
- a check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire;
- a 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.

2.1 Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the locations identified by Westcountry Fire Protection Ltd.

The extinguishers listed are checked every month by the responsible person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged. The fire blanket in the main kitchen is included in this programme. The extinguishers noted above are checked annually by Westcountry Fire Protection Ltd.

2.2 Fire alarm system

The entire premises are covered by a fire alarm system activated by smoke or heat detectors in each room or space. The system is maintained by Westcountry Fire Protection Ltd and is checked weekly by the responsible person or his representative. The responsible person will ensure that any necessary repairs are carried out promptly.

2.3 Other fire protection equipment

The main Worship Area building, the Rowe Block, the Old School Block and the staircase in the Wesley block are provided with a system of emergency lighting to current standards in the event of a power failure during the hours of darkness. The system does not extend to the Wesley Block rooms where torches are available in each room. A torch is also kept at reception in case of an emergency. At two locations automatic closure of critical fire doors is provided, activated by sounding of the fire alarm.

2.4 Permitted Room Occupancy

Based upon the external Fire Risk Assessment and supplementary knowledge of the property, the permitted occupancy limits of principal spaces are:

- Worship Area: 350 persons (inclusive of balcony)

- Wesley Room: 50 persons
- Epworth Room: 30 persons
- Rowe Hall: 100 persons
- Old School Room: 60 persons
- District Office space: 60 persons
- Priory Room: 40 persons

2.5 If you discover a fire (no matter how small)

- 1 Immediately raise the alarm by pressing a local alarm point and /or by shouting FIRE;
- 2 Telephone the fire and rescue service or get someone to do it for you while you start as para 3 below;
- 3 Check the affected part of the building for occupants and on finding any insist that they immediately evacuate the building and assemble in the carpark or Priory Gardens as appropriate;
- 4 Attack the fire if you think it is within your capability, using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk. If it is not possible to attack the fire or if you are unsure which fire extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring that all doors are closed behind you. The general rule is people before property;
- 5 Evacuate to the designated assembly point;
- 6 Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles through the main car park.

2.6 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.

2.7 Evacuation procedure

For very large services and concerts our procedures for stewarding/evacuation are as follows:

- 1 All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences. They are all clearly marked with the use of the 'running man' symbol.
- 2 A check must be made that all doors can be opened;
- 3 A trained steward must be allotted to each group of doors which lead to a final exit door and have responsibility for persons in that specific part of the premises;
- 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 main carpark or in Priory Gardens as appropriate. Stewards are to ensure that the main thoroughfare through the carpark is kept free for access by emergency personnel;
- 7 The emergency services will be contacted immediately by a nominated person or whoever discovers the fire using the telephone on the reception desk or by mobile phone;

3 Electrical safety

1. Any defects relating to portable or fixed electrical items will be reported immediately to the Facilitator and then to the responsible person for rectification;
2. A visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation annually by the responsible person and any defects rectified;
3. Every two years all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, knows how to use it and can correctly interpret the results. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of;
4. Every five years our 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 promptly carried out. The next inspection is due November 2021 ;
5. It is our policy not to sell any second-hand electrical goods;
6. 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 one of the administrative staff;
 - iii. do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
 - iv. the electrical safety of any electrical equipment brought onto the premises is the responsibility of the person bringing the equipment. No damaged or broken electrical equipment shall be brought onto the premises for any purpose;
 - v. electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use;
 - vi. Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not likely to be subjected to mechanical damage.

4 Gas equipment safety

Our gas boilers and all other gas burning equipment are maintained and checked annually by competent contractors who are registered with the Gas Safe Register in liaison with the responsible person. Any necessary repair work required for safety reasons will be implemented as soon as is practically possible.

No LPG is to be stored anywhere on the premises.

5 Hazardous substances

Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this has not been possible, our safety arrangements are as follows:

1. The Facilitator and Property Team will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used on the premises to comply with the COSHH Regulations 2002.

2. For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, highly flammable, oxidising or dangerous for the environment' used at the Mint must have data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers. This information is 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:

<i>Product:</i>	<i>Glass/stainless steel cleaner</i>
<i>Hazard level:</i>	<i>low</i>
<i>Storage:</i>	<i>to be kept in a locked cupboard</i>
<i>Protective clothing:</i>	<i>Wear overalls and gloves</i>
<i>Accidents:</i>	<i>Wash eyes with plenty of water. Avoid inhaling</i>

3. Chemicals are not to be mixed, and are not to be stored in unmarked containers.

6 Safety of plant and machinery

The responsible persons will maintain a list of all items of plant and machinery within their area of responsibility. The procedures for checking and rules for use are as follows:

1. Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and/or authorised to use;
2. Employees and voluntary workers must not ride on any parts of machinery not intended for that use;
3. Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made with the exception of programming of the Trend computer in the main boiler room;
4. After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used;
5. 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 screws or other defects;
6. Persons under the age of 18 may only use hand tools and are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery;
7. 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;
8. Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the Facilitator in the first instance;
9. All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a record kept of maintenance carried out. Principal plant items subject to maintenance routines are tabulated as follows:

Main heating system	Brothwell Irvine Ltd
Heating system Control	TCS Controls Ltd
Wesley block heating system	Brothwell Irvine Ltd
Epworth / Wesley Room gas heaters	Brothwell Irvine Ltd
Gas Cookers	Adams Gas Ltd
Lifts	Hanover Lifts Ltd
Dumb Waiter	Hanover Lifts Ltd
Entrance Doors	Dorma UK Ltd
Organ	Michael Farley

10. Persons who need to perform a task on the premises when no other persons are present must comply with the 'Lone Working' rules set down in section 15 below.

11. Certain plant and equipment systems are subject to testing by a competent person in accordance with an inspection programme. Principal items subject to statutory inspections are tabulated as follows:

Gas safety (heating systems)	Brothwell Irvine Ltd	Annual
Gas Cookers	Adams Gas Ltd	Annual
Automatic Doors	Dorma UK Ltd	Annual
Lifts	HSB Engineering Insurance Ltd	6 monthly
Dumb Waiter	HSB Engineering Insurance Ltd	Annual
Electrical Installations	MAT Electrics	5 yearly

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, a weekly inspection will be made by a responsible person of all internal floors and stairs in the premises.

The Property Team are responsible for periodic review of all external areas of the church property. Any defects will be reported to the Facilitator in the first instance.

8 Lighting

In order to ensure that the premises are adequately lit, an inspection will be made at least every month by the responsible person to ensure that all lights throughout the premises, including the church grounds (but not the District Resource Centre) are working. Any bulbs that require replacing should be reported to the Facilitator in the first instance.

9 Working at high level

This covers work in any place - irrespective of level – where, if suitable measures are not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. Common activities covered therefore include clearing of gutters and roofs, general repairs and decoration, changing light bulbs, erection of some decorations and displays and access to some mechanical and electrical plant.

Only the following persons may work at high level:

- approved contractors appointed for particular tasks and using their own equipment
- competent contractors or volunteers approved by the relevant Responsible Person and using appropriate equipment belonging to the Church Council or procured for the task

For those staff and volunteers who are likely to have occasion to work at heights the appropriate training will be given and a system of recording will detail who is working where at any time.

10 Preparation of food

The preparation of food shall be carried out only in the Main Kitchen or the Wesley Kitchen. Our procedures covering food preparation distinguish between operations which are regular and organised and registered with the local authority, and the occasional provision of food ancillary to routine or special church functions:

1 **Registered Operations:**

Although there are no registered operations currently in action our Policy is that any activity involving regular provision of food shall be registered with the local Environmental Health Officer (EHO) in the name of the licensed user, who shall be responsible for responding to routine periodic enquiries and inspections of the kitchen and the procedures in use.

2 **Occasional Operations:**

- Occasional users shall be familiar with and observe the relevant recommendations published by the Food Standards Agency, "Catering advice for charity and community groups providing food". This is available on the FSA website and a hard copy is located in the main kitchen.
- Adequate materials will be provided to enable food preparation areas to be kept clean.
- **Occasional users of the kitchen shall record all activities in the log provided**, and this will be monitored periodically by the Property Team.
- One sink to be kept for hand washing and labelled so. Only paper towels to be used for hand-drying.
- Before any food preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be thoroughly cleaned.
- All user groups are requested not to leave any foodstuffs on the premises, unless by prior arrangement.
- It is the responsibility of all users to keep fridges and cookers clean and remove all out-of-date foodstuffs.

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. 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.
2. The necessary training will be given to all those employees and volunteers who are specifically required to undertake manual handling. Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks.
3. In cases where team operations involving elements of manual handling (eg the re-ordering of room furniture before / after an event) care will be taken specifically to seek and accept participation from those volunteers who are able to do so.

12 Display screen equipment

Our policy is to assess the risks to users of computer workstations and to reduce them to the lowest practicable level. Factors considered when carrying out risk assessments include the suitability and location of the screen and ancillary equipment, the suitability of desk and seating arrangements and of the work station environment. Daily work routines will be planned to ensure periods away from the screen.

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. The buildings will be inspected annually by the responsible person;
2. Any defects noted at any time are to be immediately reported to the Facilitator and procedures put in hand for repairs;
3. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to protect against accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out;
4. A register of all known asbestos left in the building has been compiled by a competent person noting its location, type and condition and is located in the Health and Safety File. 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 via the Health and Safety File kept at reception;
5. A check has been 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.

14 Safeguarding of Children, and Adults when they are Vulnerable

- 1 The church has a current safeguarding Policy, please see separate document for details.

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

15 Personal safety and Lone Working

The Church Council is responsible for ensuring that anyone in the premises alone will be working in a safe environment, and also that those visiting people in their homes (or inviting people into their own homes on church business), will also be as safe as reasonably practical. In the latter two cases it is incumbent on the individual - in consultation with others as appropriate - to assess whether the person being visited or visiting them could pose a risk to the visitor's health or safety.

These responsibilities cannot be transferred to anyone else, including those working alone or visiting homes. Workers and volunteers have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves. The Health and Safety Executive has issued full guidance in leaflet INDG73(rev3).

We will undertake assessments of the risks involved in lone working at our premises, visiting people in their homes and accepting a visitor to their home. We will also assess the risks of particular tasks undertaken by individuals at the premises like counting money, arranging flowers, preparing communion, early morning cleaning, and carrying out maintenance.

Our premises are rather labyrinthine with several changes of level. Mobile signal reception can be weak, for example in the lower admin corridor and well area. Staircases are an inherent risk, particularly of slips trips and falls, and extra care must be taken when moving around the building while alone. Lone working or volunteering isn't ideal, but is often necessary for a variety of reasons; however the Church Council takes the safety of everyone very seriously.

The following basic rules must be followed if you come to the premises as a lone worker or volunteer, or are visiting a person in their home or accepting a visitor in your home if you are alone. YOU MUST:

1. Tell a contact when you arrive at the premises or another person's home, or when a visitor arrives.
2. Tell the SAME contact when that time is ended. (This is especially important if you are doing something else beforehand and/or after leaving the premises, or home or the person leaves your premises).
3. Have a mobile phone with you at all times during your lone working period.
4. If on Reception alone, under no circumstances give entry to anyone who gives you concern or you don't know and recognise, no matter how persistent the bell ringing!
5. If there is a problem when you are leaving, remember that an alternative exit via Mint Lane is available.
6. Do NOT use either lift if you are alone in the building, or if there is no-one staffing the reception desk - an emergency call from the lift first goes to the reception desk.

16 Risk assessments/activities

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all 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.

Individual user groups will be required to carry out assessment of their activities from time to time and to lodge them with the Facilitator. A form to promote this activity is prepared jointly between the Safeguarding and the Health and Safety groups.

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. sign in and out using the red 'Contractors Register' held at the Reception Desk, including a record of the specific task and location;
2. have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same;
3. produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained;
4. comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing both a safe place of work and a safe environment for staff, volunteers and visitors using the building during the works and to formulate and provide a safe system of operation;
5. 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;
6. use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees only with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors;
7. 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. As part of their 'permit to work' they will have provided risk assessments / method statements in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (the CDM regulations). These will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.

18 Information and Enforcement

Environmental Health Service Information:

Environmental Health Officer
Exeter City Council
Civic Centre
Paris Street
EXETER EX1 1JN

Tel 01392 265193

Email environmental.health@exeter.gov.uk

Employment Medical Advisory Service Information:

Employment Medical Advisory Service,
HSE,
2 Rivergate,
BRISTOL BS1 6EW

19 Health and Safety Law poster

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law – what you should know' is displayed on the wall in the Main Reception area.