

Health & Safety at Guiseley Baptist Church

1. Statement of Intent and Background

Our church buildings are used by many groups and individuals; and we acknowledge that we share the responsibility, with them for all our safety.

Copies of this document will be given to leaders of all groups using the Chapel, all people who regularly work in the building, and shall be published on the notice board and church website. Other church members may request a copy from the Health & Safety Officer or Church Secretary.

2. Health & Safety Officer

The Deacons have appointed a Health & Safety Officer (currently Stewart Liles) to assist them in discharging their responsibilities.

Nominated deputy Health & Safety Officers may also be appointed. In such circumstances all references in this document to the Health & Safety Officer may be applied to the deputy officer(s).

3. Accidents

A book of accident forms will be maintained, including completed and blank forms. It will be kept with the first aid kit.

All accidents must be recorded in the accident book. The completed forms are then to be passed to the Health & Safety Officer, as directed on the cover. These will be retained for at least 3 years from date that the record is created or 3 years after the injured party's 18th birthday, whichever is the greater, following the guidelines of our GDPR policy.

Any injury to anyone on the premises resulting in incapacity (which is normally defined as 3 days illness) shall be recorded in the accident book **and reported to a Deacon immediately**. The Deacon will inform the nominated Health & Safety Officer who will investigate the incident and complete a Reportable Injury, Death or Dangerous Occurrence (RIDOR) form if appropriate.

The Deacons will review a summary of accident statistics on an annual basis as prepared by the Health & Safety Officer.

4. Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments (such as that required by the insurance company for using the baptismal tank) should be submitted for approval to the Health & Safety officer and reviewed as required.

5. Contractors

We use contractors for many services including cleaning, electrical repair and general maintenance. Those engaging the contractors on behalf of the church will only use contractors when they are satisfied with the Health and Safety procedures they have in place for the protection of themselves and others.

6. Lone Working

It is common for all church employees and many volunteers to be in situations where they are a 'lone worker', for at least some of their time. This includes, but is not limited to:

- A Minister, Youth Worker, Church Administrator, cleaner or volunteer working in the church or church office when no one else is in the building;
- anyone working on maintenance or in the grounds of the church on their own;
- a Youth Worker alone with one or more young people whether in a public place, in a school or on private property;
- a solo pastoral visitor (Minister or volunteer) going to people's homes;
- members of staff (including Minister) who work from home;
- volunteers taking cash to the bank;

In these cases the risks may be increased when staff or volunteers are working outside normal hours or when it is dark.

Risks include the following:

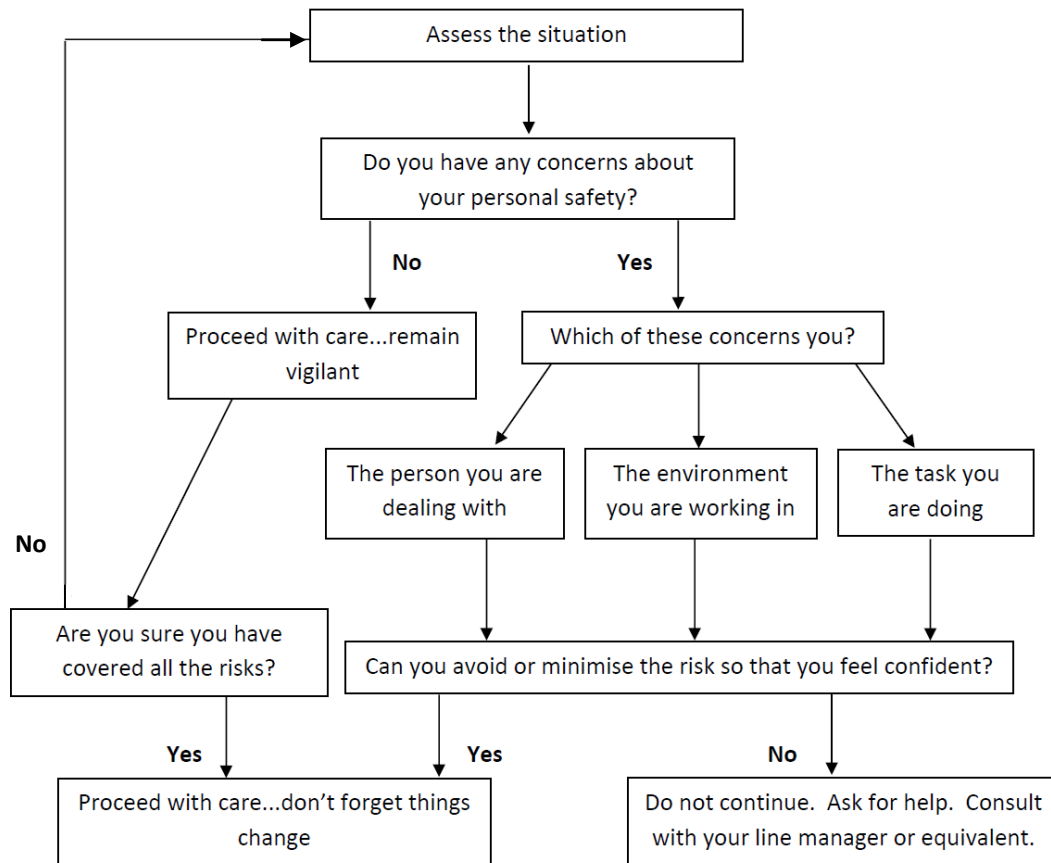
- physical accident (from injury, fire, etc. such as when using the kitchen or maintenance equipment when there is no one available to fetch help if necessary);
- sudden illness, when there is no one to raise the alarm;
- physical violence or threat of abuse in any form from a visitor;
- sexual behaviour or advances deemed to be inappropriate or threatening;
- accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers when there are no witnesses;

Wherever possible, lone working should be avoided by adopting avoidance strategies. For example, these could include the pastoral team working in pairs when visiting a home, or a Minister meeting a member of the public in a coffee shop. Clearly it is not possible, (and would be inhibitive to mission and ministry), to avoid all risks and therefore the staff member or volunteer needs to make an assessment of potential risks before embarking on an activity. Remember, it is OK to put the safety of yourself above the needs of others.

Everyone affected should read and act upon the contents of Appendix 1: "Lone Working Risk Assessment".

Appendix 2: "A Personal Safety Plan for Church People" prepared by the Baptist Insurance Company is also included for further guidance.

Use the following flow chart for your own personal safety to assess your environment, and your working practices, as well as for an instant assessment of a situation.



From Personal Safety at Work, Suzy Lamplugh Trust

7. Activities involving significant risk

Significant activities must be agreed with the Health and Safety Officer and method statements prepared if appropriate. For example significant maintenance works including decorating, replacement of electrics and roof repairs. Some works may also be need reporting to the Insurance Company before commencing.

Government statistics show there are four categories of activity that involve significantly more hazard and risk than others that apply to the Church these are:

- Working at height*
- Manual handling*
- Maintenance of buildings and grounds*
- Use of kitchens*

The Church relies on members to perform some of these tasks and welcomes their involvement. However we ask persons engaged in such activities to be careful and use their own tools wherever possible. We stipulate that persons under the age of 16 shall not be engaged on any maintenance or work at height without parental consent.

7a. Working at height

The ladders will be kept securely chained and padlocked when not in use. Keys to be held by the Health and Safety Officer and other authorised persons.

Ladders and access equipment shall be inspected by those using them immediately prior to use and any defects reported.

The extension ladders shall not be used without permission of the Health and Safety Officer. Under no circumstances should ladders or other access equipment be used by anyone on their own in the building. There must always be at least two capable adults present.

The use of ladders is always a two person activity. When someone is up the ladder, the second person must securely hold and stabilise the foot of the ladder unless it has outriggers or other stabilising devices. It follows that the second person must be of sufficient strength to perform this task.

No access to the roof space, gutter or the voids under the Chapel shall be made without permission of the Health and Safety Officer. An individual working on their own in the premises shall not access these areas.

7b. Manual handling

Do not lift more than you are comfortable with. Avoid lifting where possible, use mechanical aids where practical. In general do not lift more than 20kg (male) 15kg (female) without assistance.

See Appendix 3 for information on safe lifting techniques

7c. Maintenance of buildings and grounds

Do not use power tools or motorised garden equipment such as lawnmowers and strimmers when children are present.

Extension leads – These should be fully unwound prior to use to prevent heat build up.

Gardening equipment and power tools must be locked away when not in use.

7d. Use of Kitchens

The church has a food hygiene policy which must be followed at all times. It is displayed in the kitchen. People regularly preparing food for others should have a Level 2 Food Hygiene qualification.

Items with sharp edges such as knives must be kept out of sight in their designated location.

Children under the age of 12 shall not be allowed in the kitchen.

8. Display Screen Equipment

Display Screen Equipment (such as computer monitors and TVs) must not be continually used for a period of 2 hours or more. In the event of discomfort the operator will take a break and contact the Health & Safety Officer if the problem persists.

9. Cleaning Chemicals

Cleaning chemicals such as dishwasher liquids, bleach, cleaners and disinfectant will only be kept in the locked cupboard under the stairs or in the shed. Those in use in the kitchen should be stored in the cupboard under the sink, which must be kept locked at all times. Spillages must be cleaned up immediately.

10. Electrical Safety

Electrical Equipment shall be visually inspected for damage prior to use, if defective it shall be labelled as such and the Health & Safety Officer informed.

The testing regime for mains powered electrical equipment is:

- Portable Appliance Testing (P.A.T.) – at the appropriate intervals
- Fixed Wiring Testing – every 5 years

Testing will be carried out by a competent and qualified person and defects remedied or equipment removed.

11. Fire

In the event of the fire alarm sounding or a fire being noticed, the premises will be evacuated and the fire brigade called.

The assembly area is by the flat-roofed building on the other side of Oxford Road.

Do not attempt to fight the fire unless it is safe to do so.

Fire Extinguishers are provided and checked annually by an appropriate company.

Fire Exits shall be clearly labelled and left clear at all times. During services the aisles and the area behind the back row of chairs are to be kept clear of things such as prams/buggies and wheelchairs etc. People must not add extra chairs to the ends of rows.

If lighted candles are used (eg. during services or meals etc.) A responsible person should be designated to monitor them and extinguish them as soon as the service/meal finishes.

For services where the only lighting is from candles, make sure that there is always someone near the light switches to turn them in an emergency.

Coats and bags etc. must not be placed on top of the electric heaters. They may be cold when someone places an item on a heater but the thermostat can bring them on at any time.

The button to operate the fire alarm is in the entrance hall, on the wall between the light switch and burglar alarm keypad.

To **reset** the fire alarm button and silence the sounders a special key needs to be inserted into the bottom of the red box. These are currently held by the Minister, Youth Worker and Stewart Liles.

To reset it:

1. Enter the alarm code on the panel (This partially silences it)
2. Insert the key into the red box
3. Enter the alarm code on the panel again (It should now be silent)
4. Remove the key

12. First Aid

It is not practical for the Church to have first-aiders on site at all times, however, a list of qualified people is kept and one of them is usually available at most services/events.

First aid kits will be provided – one in church with another at the church offices. Do not add anything to the contents of a first aid kit without first checking with the Health & Safety Officer or qualified first-aider.

Anyone giving first aid is reminded:

- not to administer drugs (including things such as aspirin and paracetamol) or tell someone to take drugs although an adult patient may ask for drugs or take their own.
- call for assistance from doctor or ambulance as appropriate

13. Hazardous substances (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 1994)

No person shall bring onto site or allow to be used materials that are not generally available to the public without informing the Health & Safety Officer in advance. Cleaning, decorating and building repair materials, etc. should be used and stored according to their instructions.

14. Sharps

If sharps (discarded needles, etc) are discovered:

- if they do not pose an immediate hazard – contact the local authority to arrange collection and disposal.
- if movement is unavoidable – using a litter picker or sticks place the sharp in a clearly labelled can (sharp end down) and contact the local authority to arrange collection and disposal.

Report finds to the Health & Safety Officer

15. Broken Glass

Large amounts of broken glass should not normally be placed in the bin but taken to the local authority waste site for disposal. Small quantities such as broken jars and bottles should be placed in a cardboard box (not newspaper or a bin liner) in the black bin.

16. Comments, suggestions or complaints, regarding safety

Should be made to the Health & Safety Officer or Church Secretary.

Adopted by the deacons on behalf of Guiseley Baptist Church 5/5/05
Amended: 4/12/08, 6/2/12, 17/1/15, 15/05/23