

## **The Church of St Bartholomew Great Gransden**

### **Health and Safety Policy**

Local Authority Environmental Health Officers are responsible for enforcing Health and Safety legislation in churches. They have the power to enter churches at any time to ensure that we are complying with the law.

Although the law states that a written Health and Safety Policy is required if an organisation has five or more employees, the Health and safety Executive are increasingly viewing volunteers as employees and expect them to be provided with the same level of protection.

This document aims to help increase awareness of Health and Safety Policy and Procedures. It is based on the Church Health and Safety Policy, prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the regulations made under it, and in accordance with advice issued by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group.

#### **SECTION 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 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 and churchyard.

This policy will be kept up to date, and reviewed at least annually, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities.

A copy of the current issue of this policy is given to the leader of each voluntary group working on behalf of the Rector, churchwardens and PCC of St Bartholomew's Church Great Gransden.

Signed

The Rev'd Rachel Blanchflower

Priest in Charge

Date:

## **SECTION B - Organisation and Responsibilities**

### **1. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INCUMBENT**

The incumbent has overall responsibility for health and safety in the church and churchyard.

### **2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCHWARDENS**

The churchwardens are responsible for ensuring that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented and maintained.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER**

The PCC has not assigned a Health and Safety Officer. The churchwardens oversee activities in the church and churchyard and are aware of the following responsibilities:

- I. Being familiar with Health and Safety Regulations as far as they concern church premises.
  - II. Being familiar with this Health and Safety Policy and ensure that it is observed.
  - III. Ensuring that as far as is reasonably practicable, safe systems of work are in place.
  - IV. Ensuring that the church is clean and tidy.
  - V. Working in liaison with the Parish Council to maintain the (closed) churchyard
  - VI. Ensuring that safety equipment and clothing is used by all personnel where this is required.
  - VII. Ensuring plant and equipment is properly maintained.
  - VIII. Ensuring that adequate access and egress is maintained.
  - IX. Ensuring that adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained.
- Note: The churchyard is "closed" and as such the Parish Council is responsible for its maintenance.

### **5. VOLUNTARY HELPERS**

All voluntary helpers are obliged 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 or premises.

Voluntary workers must therefore:

- Comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and work procedures.
- Use protective clothing and equipment when required.

- Report any fault or defect in church owned equipment (e.g. ladders, electrical equipment) immediately to the appropriate person.
- Report any accidents, injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
- Not misuse anything provided in the interests of health & safety.

## 6. RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL

The following have primary responsible for safety in particular areas:

**Activity** (numbers in brackets refer to section and paragraph number)

Accident reporting (C.1)	Churchwardens
Bell ringing (C.2)	Tower Captain
Building defects / glazing (C.13)	Churchwardens
Child protection (C.14)	Child Protection Co-ordinator
Choir	Choir Mistress
Condition of churchyard	Churchwardens
Condition of floor and stairs (C.7)	Churchwardens
Contractors	Churchwardens / Church Architect
Fetes and Outings (C.16)	Churchwardens
Fire extinguishers (C.2)	Churchwardens
Fixed electrical systems (C.3)	Churchwardens
Food preparation (C.10)	Churchwardens
Light bulb changing (C.8)	Churchwardens
Personal safety (C.15)	Churchwardens
Plant & equipment (C.6)	Churchwardens
Portable electrical appliances C.3)	Churchwardens
Tower tours (C.16)	Tower Captain

### Area of Church

Main body of church	Churchwardens
Organ loft	Churchwardens
Vestries	Churchwardens
Ringling chamber	Tower Captain
Bell chamber	Tower Captain
Boiler Room	Churchwardens
Churchyard	Churchwardens / Parish Council
Church roofs	Churchwardens

## SECTION C - Arrangements

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to health and safety of voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors.

## 1. ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The First Aid Box is located in the kitchen area at the base of the tower.

An accident report will be completed in the event of accident or serious incident. The accident book is located in the vicar's vestry.

## 2. GENERAL FIRE SAFETY

An assessment of fire risk has been carried out.

Fire extinguishers are provided and maintained annually.

Evacuation procedure:

For large services, concerts etc. the congregation is advised of the emergency procedures before commencement of the event.

Stewards are allotted to each door and have responsibility for that part of the church.

The Head Steward, who will be assigned beforehand, is responsible for calling the emergency services.

If you discover a fire:

- Raise the alarm immediately
- Telephone the emergency services
- Check the building for occupants, and evacuate the premises if occupied.
- Attack the fire if possible, within your capability, without taking personal risk.
- If it is not possible to attack the fire evacuate the building, ensuring, if possible, that all doors are closed behind you.

## 3. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Portable electrical equipment is checked by a qualified electrician at two yearly intervals. The last test was on 5 October 2018
- Every five years, the fixed electrical system will be tested by an NICEIC or ECA approved electrician. The last inspection was held in March 2016.
- Every five years the lightning conductors will be tested by a competent firm of engineers. The last test was in May 2018.

Misuse and abuse of electrical equipment can cause fires or injury. All voluntary workers must observe the following:

- Visually check all equipment before use.
- Report any faults immediately to the churchwardens.
- Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.
- No electrical equipment should be brought into the church and used without reference to the churchwardens.
- Portable electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods, or if the church is left unattended.
- Flexible cables should be so positioned and protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard or are subject to mechanical damage.

## 4. GAS EQUIPMENT – not applicable

## 5. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Small quantities of household cleaning materials are stored in the church.

Any substances e.g. floor cleaner, required for major spring-cleaning are brought in for use at the time, and then removed.

## 6. SAFETY OF PLANT AND MACHINERY

The church has a folding stepladder, which should only be used if two people are present.

Access to the church roof is via a turret staircase. Part of the church roof is only accessible by use of an extending ladder, which is brought in for the purpose. Only persons authorised by the churchwardens may go on to the church roofs.

Access to the church tower is via a turret staircase. The church bell ringers use the staircase weekly. Otherwise, only people authorised by the tower captain, deputy tower captain, steeple keeper or churchwardens may enter the tower. Access to the tower roof is authorised only by the churchwardens. A separate risk assessment has been carried out and documented for access to the church tower. (See Great Gransden Church Bell Ringers Handbook)

The church boiler room is only accessed by authorisation of the priest in charge or churchwardens.

Voluntary workers use their own equipment and tools for churchyard maintenance.

## 7. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Although there are steps within the church the main tripping and falling hazards are in restricted areas as described within this document. Moving around the church is not considered to be extraordinarily hazardous. Risk assessments have been carried out for voluntary church workers using stairways and working at heights. (See Appendix 3)

## 8. LIGHTING

Any light bulb, which requires replacing, will be dealt with by the churchwardens.

## 9. WORKING AT HIGH LEVELS

The following areas are designated as “high” areas:

Interior	Exterior
Clock room gantry	All church roofs
Bell chamber	
Old bell chamber	

Use of the folding steps or ladders within the body of the church

The following work is authorised without special agreement:

Changing light bulbs in the nave.

Low level cleaning.  
Maintenance of clock and bells.  
Changing altar frontals and preparation for routine church services.

The following work requires authorisation by the churchwardens:

Access to all roofs. e.g. for inspection and/or clearing roofs and down pipes of leaves.

#### 10. PREPARATION OF FOOD

Food preparation is not carried out on the church premises. Food provided for special functions is prepared at home. e.g. cold buffet. Coffee and biscuits are available after some church services and other functions.

#### 11. MANUAL HANDLING

Normal activities such as preparing for church services are carried out by churchwardens, sidesmen and servers. If there is need to carry out additional activities, especially involving heavy or bulky items, this is supervised by the churchwardens.

#### 12. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

Display screen equipment is not used routinely and is be classed as portable electrical equipment.

#### 13. HAZARDOUS BUILDING GLAZING

There is no hazardous glazing.

The church is inspected daily by a churchwarden for any damage. Any defects are reported immediately to the priest in charge and arrangements made to clean the area if necessary and effect repairs.

#### 14. SAFEGUARDING

The church operates a Safeguarding policy. (See separate documentation)

#### 15. PERSONAL SAFETY

Church cleaning is carried out by a group of volunteers. People often work alone in the church carrying out these duties.

#### 16. ACTIVITIES AND OTHER HAZARDS

In addition to weekly church cleaning, preparation and attendance at services, choir practice and bell ringing, the following activities take place periodically.

- Church fete
- Tower tours
- Churchyard maintenance
- Erection of temporary staging for special church services or concerts.
- Sponsored events

Each event is planned and supervised by churchwarden or another competent volunteer delegated at the time. Due care is taken to prevent personal injury or damage to property.

Risk assessments have been carried out on potentially hazardous activities carried out by church workers and volunteers. (See Appendix 3)

## CHURCH WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS

### CONTACTS

Priest in charge:	The Revd Rachel Blanchflower	
Churchwardens:	Rob Chignell	677322
	Iain Strath	
Choir Mistress:	Sheila George	677553
Tower Captain:	Sheila George	677553
Safeguarding Co-ordinator:	Phillip George	677553

### AUTHORISATION

Working at high levels:	Rob Chignell	677322
	Phillip George	677553

From time to time churchwardens may delegate certain responsibilities where applicable and subject to correct instruction being given.

Policy issued:      May 2019                      Signed:

Date: