



BLISWORTH BAPTIST CHURCH

Health & Safety Policy

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work 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**

Note 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 and the overall arrangements for health and safety.

Date: October 2023

Review Date: September 2026

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 all others who may visit the church, church grounds and any associated buildings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement this policy are set out in the following sections.

This 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, 'Health and Safety' will be a standing agenda item of all meetings of the Church Leadership Team; and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Signed: **Ray Payne**

Church Secretary

(For and on behalf of the Trustees of Blisworth Baptist Church)

Date: **17th October 2023**

B. Organisation and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Church Leadership Team (Trustees)

The overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Trustees. The Church Leaders have the responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented and that the arrangements outlined in this policy are reviewed and updated as necessary.

Responsibility of the Pastor

The Pastor, due to his all embracing list of duties, has a general day-to-day responsibility for health and safety compliance. He will ensure that practises and arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to other church personnel. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list amended accordingly.

Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer 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) Advise on the carrying out of suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk to the health and safety of those who use the church premises and identification of appropriate controls.
- 5) Provide advice and guidance in relation to maintenance and servicing of the church buildings and grounds; safety precautions, equipment and clothing; maintenance of plant, tools and equipment and

training/competence of operators; adequacy of access and egress routes and fire-fighting equipment.

- 6) Carry out investigations of any accidents and recommend measures for preventing their recurrence.
- 7) Ensure that accident and other appropriate records are maintained and reported to the appropriate bodies.
- 8) Carry out regular inspections of church premises, grounds and equipment to identify potential hazards, or lack of adequate control, and advise suitable remedial actions.
- 9) Provide regular update reports to the Pastor/H&S Trustee.

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 or 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 required.
- 3) Undertake risk assessments – appropriate to their event or activity while on church business or premises.
- 4) Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person.
- 5) Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
- 6) Not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Responsible person(s)

Health and Safety Officer:	Bryan Tate
Pastor:	Lee Hillyard
Health & Safety Trustee:	Ray Payne
H&S Maintenance Engineer:	Keith Barker

C. Arrangements

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, contractors and users of the church premises.

First Aid

First Aid kits are located in the Coffee House and the Leisure Hall. The Health & Safety Officer will carry out regular checks, and replenish items as necessary.

Accident Reporting

Once any injuries are appropriately treated and the area made safe, all accidents must be reported to the person responsible for the activity or persons involved.

The responsible person should then complete the Accident Book, and report the matter to the church office and inform the Pastor/Health and Safety Officer at the earliest opportunity.

In addition, near misses, hazards and unsafe conditions are to be reported to the Pastor/Health & Safety Officer, at the earliest opportunity.

Accident Reports and Hazard Reports are reviewed by the Health and Safety Officer, who will report regularly to the Health & Safety Trustee.

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) there is a statutory requirement to report certain types of accident, dangerous occurrences and disease to the enforcing authorities. Where necessary, these reports will be submitted by the Health and Safety Officer, in liaison with the Health & Safety Trustee.

Fire Safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

- Assessment of the fire risks in the church and buildings.
- Assessment of the risks to our neighbours.
- Ensure that people who may be in the building can get out safely.
- Provide emergency lighting and fire exit signage, as necessary.
- Provide reasonable firefighting equipment.

- Ensure that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire – the actions in event of fire are displayed and communicated to users of the premises, including regular announcements and reminders to the congregation during a service.
- Checks of the premises before occupation and prior to locking up to ensure no fire risk exists.
- A regular 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.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in various locations in the Church, at points where the risk of a fire starting is considered greatest.

The extinguishers are checked every month by the Health & Safety Officer to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged.

The extinguishers are checked annually by a specialist fire protection company.

Evacuation Procedures

All employees and voluntary workers should ensure that they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

Those with reduced mobility will be identified and appropriate assistance arranged.

For large events, or any new events, or any one-off events, then specific thought will be given to the stewarding/evacuation arrangements (an event risk assessment must be completed). These arrangements must include the following points:

- 1 All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences and be clearly marked as fire exits.
- 2 A check must be made that all doors can be opened.
- 3 Stewards must be allotted and have responsibility for people in a specific part of the building.
- 4 The location and use of each fire extinguisher should be known by key people at the event.
- 5 If emergency lighting is not available, torches must be available for each steward.

6 The evacuation arrangements will be announced at the start of each 'new' or large event.

7 For Sunday Services, the evacuation arrangements will be announced regularly as part of a service.

8 In the event of an emergency (fire/bomb threat, etc.) an announcement to leave the building will be made by the Pastor or a member of the Church Leadership Team.

9 People will assemble in the Front Garden, near to the road (if necessary, they will be directed and escorted further away if the fire is so large as to cause further risk and/or to avoid blocking access for the emergency services). (Fire Assembly Point is signed.)

10 The emergency services will be contacted immediately by the Pastor or a member of the Church Leadership Team, using a mobile phone.

Electrical Safety

1 A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the Health & Safety Officer.

2 Every three months plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the Health & Safety Officer to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any required repairs will be reported to the Pastor/Maintenance Engineer for action.

3 Our portable electrical equipment will be tested regularly (PAT testing) 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 carried out.

5 At intervals of not more than two and a half years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers.

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 the Pastor or Health & Safety Officer
- (iii) Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment

(iv) No electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered in the electrical equipment record.

Electrical items brought in for occasional use, which do not remain in church property, may only be used at the discretion of the church appointed leader of the event or organisation concerned.

(v) Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods

(vi) Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and cannot suffer mechanical damage.

Gas Equipment Safety

As necessary, gas equipment is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor, who is registered with the Gas Safe Register.

Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

Hazardous Substances

The Health & Safety Officer will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used in the church.

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

For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment', data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers are used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, and action to take in the event of an accident.

Safety of Plant & Machinery

The Health & Safety Officer will maintain a list of all items of plant and machinery.

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.

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 other defects.

6 The appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery.

7 Persons under the age of 18 may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery.

8 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.

9 Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person.

10 All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.

11 Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication, and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken, and agreed a procedure to ensure that their safety is checked on.

Slips, Trips & Falls - Condition of Floors, Steps and Paths

In order to reduce, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every three months by the Health & Safety Officer of:

- All floors and stairs in the church and buildings.
- All paths and steps in the grounds.

Any defects or potential problems will be reported to the Pastor/Maintenance Engineer, who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

In addition, the Health & Safety Officer/Pastor/Maintenance Engineer will liaise over arrangements for the clearing of paths in the event of accumulation of moss, algae and leaves, and after snow falls or during icy conditions.

Lighting

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an ongoing check will be made by the Pastor as he carries out his weekly duties. Checks will be made to ensure that all lights in the various rooms throughout the building and the church grounds are working. He will liaise with the H&S Officer and Maintenance Engineer regarding the replacement of any defective bulbs, ensuring that all appropriate safety procedures are implemented.

The Health & Safety Officer will inspect that all lights are working, as part of his Quarterly Health & Safety Inspection Visit. Any defective bulbs will be reported to the Pastor/Maintenance Engineer for replacement.

Work at High Levels

Only the following work is authorised without special arrangements:

- Replacing light bulbs in the church.
- Servicing and replacing lamps of high level A/V projectors.
- Clearing leaves and debris from the gutters.

N.B. If a ladder is used, other than a small step-ladder, then a second adult must be present to assist.

Kitchen Area/Preparation of Food

1 We ensure that we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs.

2 We ensure that all food handlers have received appropriate supervision, instruction and training.

3 We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures.

4 Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and disinfected.

5 Food preparation may only take place in the kitchen area.

6 We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

7 Access to the kitchen area is controlled to restrict potential for accidental contact with hot surfaces, boiling liquids and sharp implements.

Manual Handling

1 Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable.

2 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.

3 Where and when it is considered necessary, training will be given to all those employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling.

Display Screen Equipment

The nature of work carried out in the church will mean that very limited exposure to visual display screens will occur. However, our policy is to assess the risks to all users of computer workstations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible.

The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- Stability and legibility of the screen.
- Contrast and brightness of the screen.
- Tilt and swivel of the screen.
- Suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs.
- The work station environment.
- The user-friendliness of the software.

Where necessary, risk assessments will be carried out by the Health & Safety Officer.

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. In order to achieve this, the buildings are inspected every quarter by the Health & Safety Officer.

2 Any defects noted are immediately reported to the Pastor/Maintenance Engineer and procedures are put in hand for repairs.

3 Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

4 If any asbestos is discovered, and it is damaged, then a specialist licensed contractor will be contacted.

5 A check is 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.

Sharps

Needles, and other paraphernalia associated with illicit drug use, may be discarded on the premises. If encountered, the area will be secured to prevent others, including children, touching the items, which may be contaminated. The items will be removed and disposed of according to Health & Safety guidance.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be carried out for all activities that carry a significant risk, by a competent person, in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The following are examples of activities that will require risk assessments:

- Fêtes, including the use of bouncy castles;
- Sponsored walks, visits and outings;
- Church maintenance;
- Roof maintenance;
- Erection of temporary staging.

Risk Assessments – 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.

For all hazardous activities, the contractor/s will need to carry out risk assessments and introduce procedures that must be followed, and be able to provide us with a copy of them on request. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- 1 Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same.
- 2 Produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained.
- 3 Comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.
- 4 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.
- 5 Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.
- 6 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. This 'permit to work' will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.

These terms and conditions will be checked by the person hiring the contractor on behalf of the Church.

Risk Assessments – Users of the Church

For all activities, other users of the church premises need to carry out risk assessments and introduce procedures that must be followed, and be able to provide a copy of them on request. The following are examples of activities that will require risk assessments:

- Children's parties including the use of bouncy castles;
- Sponsored walks, visits and outings;
- Any event where a child/young person may stray beyond the church rooms and grounds;
- Activities that have an increased risk of physical injury or fire risk (e.g. dancing, pottery work using a kiln).

Smoke Free Legislation

In accordance with the 2007 legislation, smoking is banned anywhere within the church premises. 'No Smoking' signs will be displayed prominently at each public entrance to the premises.

Lone Working

Working alone should be avoided if at all possible, but it is inevitable that from time-to-time this will happen in carrying out church business and duties. Lone workers must inform someone of their plans, carry a mobile phone and arrange to call/text when planning to leave the building, and when you have arrived home safely. It is important that appropriate security measures should be taken, such as locking doors to avoid anyone else gaining entry in to the building. Repair work, and especially the use of ladders, should not take place unaccompanied, or without someone else in the building.

Security

The Church will take measures to aid the security of the premises. Keys will only be handed to specific, identified individuals, who will be required to sign for them. An entry/exit alarm system will be installed. CCTV will be installed, complying to all regulations, with cameras at various points both inside and outside of the building.

Health & Safety Visits

The Health & Safety Officer will be responsible for carrying out regular H&S Visits to inspect and assess aspects of safety, as described in this policy. A record of the findings will be maintained, and copied to the H&S Trustee. Where any aspect is recorded as requiring action, then the matter will be monitored through subsequent visits, to ensure that the issue has been dealt with. An update report will be given to the Church Leadership Team at their quarterly meetings.

The Health & Safety Visits will take one of three forms:

- An Annual Health & Safety Audit of the whole building, carried out by the Health & Safety Trustee and the Health & Safety Officer together (accompanied by the Maintenance Engineer where possible)
- Monthly and Quarterly Health & Safety Visits carried out by the Health & Safety Officer (see table below).
- Visits by outside, specialist companies (see table below).

Regular Inspections/Testing

Frequency	Area of Inspection	Responsibility	Notes
Monthly	Fire Extinguishers	H&S Officer	Inspect
Quarterly	Electrics, Lighting, Floors, Paths, Steps, Building fabric (incl. glazing), Grounds	H&S Officer	Inspect
Annually	Fire Extinguishers, Gas Appliances (Portable Electrical Equipment will be tested every 2/3 years)	Specialist Companies	H&S Officer to arrange
2.5 Years	Lightning Conductor	Specialist Company	H&S Officer to arrange
5 Years	Fixed Electrical Equipment	Specialist Company	H&S Officer to arrange

