



COLLEGIATE AND PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY DE CASTRO
Castle Street, Leicester LE1 5WN

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

As a church, we understand that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit our church or churchyard. We also know that, where we are an employer or control premises in certain circumstances, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety. We do not have any employees.

General Statement of Policy

Our policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our volunteers, congregation, visitors or others who may use the church or churchyard. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) accepts its responsibility for this. We will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this object. Any decisions we make will have due regard for this policy.

We will appoint a member of the PCC to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. Safeguarding and Health and Safety will be a standing item on the agenda for all PCC meetings. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid and requires updating.

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

Further detail about our organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety is set out in this document. A copy of it will be kept in church and made available to others on request.

An earlier version of the document was signed by Chris Phillips on behalf of the PCC as agreed at a meeting on 7 June 2018. The document has been reviewed several times with this latest version being signed after the APCM in April 2026.

Organisation and responsibilities

1. The person with overall responsibility for implementing our policy is Alan Fletcher. He will ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy satisfy any health and safety law, seeking specialist health and safety advice if necessary.
2. The following persons have day-to day responsibility for implementing our policy: Chris Phillips, Alan Fletcher, Paul Kellett, Sheila West and Matthew Leavy. They will ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy are carried out.

3. All volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or premises.

Arrangements

This section sets out our arrangements for the general management of health and safety, and for dealing with specific risks.

1. General Arrangements

Risk assessment

Where necessary, we will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

Information and training

We will provide any necessary information and training for our volunteers in a timely manner. We will keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors and self-employed people who may need this to complete their work safely.

First aid

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including – as a minimum – a suitably stocked first aid box and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information to volunteers.

Our first aid box is located in the cupboard at the end of the servery.

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is Chris Phillips.

Accident reporting

We will record details of any accidents that occur. We will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of significant accidents, specified injuries, public hospitalisations and dangerous occurrences to volunteers and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Records of any accidents are kept in the safe in the Sacristy.

Monitoring

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate. We will also ensure that any electrical equipment and church utilities are inspected as necessary to ensure that they remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

Contractors

If we engage contractors, we make sure that they have their own health and safety policy and Public and Employers Liability Insurance by asking to see copies of the relevant documents.

Record keeping

Our Health and Safety Risk Assessments, records and other documents are kept in the safe in the Sacristy

2. Specific Arrangements

Bell ringing

We will ensure that adequate precautions are in place to protect bellringers and others who may enter the ringing chamber. This may include: any emergency evacuation procedure; a safe means of heating; the provision of fire extinguishers; the provision of emergency lighting; and the notification of safety procedures to visiting bellringers. All aspects of this are controlled by our expert bell ringing specialist, Lewis Benfield. Lewis who is supervised by another expert (Vic Allsop) who is a member of the PCC.

Church buildings

We will ensure that the fabric of our building is regularly inspected to make sure it is safe. Defects will be repaired as soon as practicable bearing in mind that a faculty may be required. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made, and this includes the stained glass and other windows. We have a regular inspection of the fabric by a representative of the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company. This vital work is controlled and overseen by Chris Phillips (Churchwarden) and Paul Kellett (Deputy Churchwarden) who have been performing this role for many years, as a result of which they have significant relevant knowledge. They are both members of the Standing Committee and of the PCC. We have CCTV both inside and outside the church which records any behaviour which should be reported to the police, with whom we have an excellent relationship.

Churchyard

Our churchyard has been closed since the 1850s and is the responsibility of Leicester City Council. Our Head Server (Matthew Leavy) who is a professional gardener monitors the churchyard on a regular basis so that, as necessary, reports can be made to Leicester City Council.

Construction work

Where maintenance and restoration work is planned for our church, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts. We will also determine if we have any responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and comply with these if necessary.

Electricity

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliances are inspected, tested and maintained by someone who is competent to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made. Paul Kellett, who has extensive relevant professional contacts in this area, has been in charge of this work for many years.

Events

When we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services or other fund-raising events, we will work with the organisers and other relevant people in order to identify additional precautions that are necessary and implement these. This is a routine responsibility of the Standing Committee.

Fire

We have contacts with specialists in this area in conjunction with whom risk assessments, training and regular servicing of fire extinguishers in the church are conducted. Training of all PCC members and various volunteers is a regular part of this.

Heating systems

We regularly ensure that our gas heating system is suitably maintained and checked at least annually by professional specialists overseen by Paul Kellett. Any defects are corrected immediately and records are kept.

Hazardous substances

The church is regularly cleaned on a Wednesday by a team led by Sheila West who is a Deputy Churchwarden and member of the Standing Committee. The cleaners only use domestic cleaning materials which are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions, taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

Preparation of food

We will ensure that on those occasions when we prepare food this will be done on the servery at the back of the church which is a clean and disinfected work surface; and all utensils and equipment are also clean and disinfected. Food is stored in such a way as to avoid contamination (in fridges) and the church has hand washing facilities in the servery area with suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste.

Slips and trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips and trips. There are two doors into the church one of which has a step down that is identified by tape and the other which has a level entrance so is the entrance to which people are directed. Periodic checks are used to ensure that floors, steps and pathways remain in good condition and any precautions such as tape and lighting remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified and keep records of these. We have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather which is a particular focus of Paul Kellett and Matthew Leavy.

Working at height

St Mary de Castro is a large church with high ceilings. Whenever work at height is required, Paul Kellett instructs relevant professional contacts to undertake the work which is never undertaken by church members.

Work equipment

The work equipment which is required by contractors is always provided by them and never by the church.

Working alone

We have a very strict Lone Working policy in place, which forbids lone working in the church.