

GORING UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

BARRINGTON ROAD, GORING BY SEA, WORTHING, WEST SUSSEX BN12 4EA

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Our Policy, as far as it is reasonably practical, is to provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment throughout the church buildings and grounds for all who use them.

Regular reviews of the policy and the way in which it is operated will ensure it is kept up to date. The policy should also be reviewed at times of major building alterations or change of use.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The overall responsibility for Health and Safety at Goring United Reformed Church rests with the Minister, the Elders and the Property Management Group.

Responsibility to ensure the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out lies with the Property Management Group.

Responsibility for review and updating lies with the Health & Safety officer.

Church leaders and the leaders of groups who use the church (e.g. adult/children's groups, worship groups) should read this policy and note the points pertinent to their group's activities.

The co-operation of all users is essential in order to implement this policy. Users are encouraged to take all reasonable precautions to avoid accidents and injury to themselves or others and damage to equipment or premises. Any hazard that a user is not able to deal with should be reported immediately to the Health and Safety Officer or a member of the Property Management Group.

Members of staff, volunteers, groups and organisations using these premises are reminded that they are responsible for their own Health and Safety and the safety of the others in the premises.

The Property Management Group will be responsible for discussing matters surrounding Health and Safety. This Group meets roughly every three months, when time will be devoted to any Health and Safety issues arising. Any member of the group should be contacted to discuss and raise safety issues within this group.

Contact email: property@gurc.org.uk

Risk Assessment

Hazards will be identified and Risk Assessments will be performed. The outcome of this assessment will be recorded and kept in the Health and Safety folder stored in the Property Group Cupboard [MH1]. The significant findings of this assessment will be made available to members and volunteers via the church website (**gurc.net**), through information, instruction and training, as appropriate.

Where actions are needed to reduce or eliminate risk, a time scale will be set by which the corrective actions are to be completed. This will be based on the principle of "As Low as Reasonably Practicable".

Any person discovering a hazard must inform the Property Management Group as soon as possible. In the case of serious and immediate danger, the correct emergency procedures must be followed. This notice about discovering a hazard is to appear on the Church's website, also to be printed in the WELCOME sheet once a year.

3. ARRANGEMENTS:

3.1 INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance of the church premises will be carried out by the **Property Management Group, and inspected by the H&S officer.**

The results of an annual health and safety inspection will be reported to the Church meeting. The areas and potential hazards to be inspected are as listed on the Risk Assessment form at Annex A.

3.2 FIRST AID

First aid kits are available in the kitchen, in the passageway outside the main hall and in the vestibule at the front door of the Church and are clearly marked.

Only suitably trained and competent persons should administer first aid.

First aid kits will be checked regularly, by a nominated person (Val Gill) to check whether the contents have been used; are restocked as required; that none of the contents have expired and that no medicines or other preparations are contained within the kit.

If anyone is seriously ill/injured call 999 immediately and request assistance.

All accidents (even minor ones) should be recorded in the accident book, which is kept with the first aid kit in the kitchen. The accident book will be regularly reviewed by the First Aid Officer, Val Gill. It will also be reviewed annually at a Property Group meeting.

3.3 FIRE

There is a separate Fire Risk Assessment which is reviewed annually.

There are certain areas of the church building that have a higher risk of fire than others. These are:

the mains intake area (in the disabled toilet outside the Cornwall room), the kitchen, the boiler (which is in the print room), electric fires, and electrical supply points when in use.

There are a number of well sign posted fire exits, which can be used in the event of a fire.

The fire alarm will be tested every two months by church personnel and serviced annually by a contractor.

It is the duty of the service leaders, duty elders, stewards, and group leaders to acquaint themselves with:

- (a) The location of the exit doors and how they are opened.
- (b) The positions and use of all fire fighting equipment in the church, including the kitchen.
- (c) Ways to assist/direct people out of church.

3.4 EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event of discovering a fire:

- Immediately raise the alarm
- Evacuate the building using the nearest fire exits
- Whoever is in charge should ensure the fire brigade is called
- Leave the church in an orderly manner as directed, the assembly point is by the main notice board in the south east corner at the front of the church
- Do not stop to collect personal possessions and do not run. Due care should be given to vulnerable people, both adults and children
- Children in other parts of the building should be collected by their parents when not in a leader led group. All other children will be escorted from the building by their group leader/s
- The duty elder will ensure that the whole building has been vacated (including vestries, kitchen & toilets) without putting himself/herself at risk
- The children's groups will remain under the direction of their leaders until they are collected by their parents/guardians at the assembly area
- Unless in a group, all children remain the responsibility of their parents or guardians
- Do not re-enter the premises until advised by the fire service that it is safe to do so
- Fire drills will be held at regular intervals (biannually)

3.5 SECURITY

- All external doors and windows should be closed and locked when the building is vacated
- All internal doors should be closed and not left wedged open
- Keys should not have labels which associate them with the church, e.g. do not label 'Goring United Reformed Church'
- Key-holders should not lend their keys to anyone other than approved key users
- A list of all key-holders is kept by Wilma Smith
- CCTV will be tested regularly (monthly)

3.6 SAFEGAURDING

We are committed to safeguarding, please view our separate safeguarding policy

3.7 ELECTRICITY

- Faulty light bulbs will be replaced as soon as practical and should not be left out of lamp holders leaving exposed live terminals
- Any equipment that develops a fault should be reported immediately and not used until it has been repaired
- Exposed sockets in rooms used for children's activities must be protected by safety covers
- Extension leads and other cables should not trail over the floor leaving a trip hazard
- Temporary trailing leads should be covered with a safety mat.
- Electrical circuits can be turned off by using the main switch in the choir vestry for the Sanctuary circuits, and the disabled toilet off the Cornwall Room for all the hall circuits
- Portable electrical appliances will be visually checked annually and electrically tested every 3 years by an electrical contractor to ensure that all appliances are safe. In high risk areas [KITCHEN] this 3 years is reduced to annually. All users of the kitchen are reminded to check kettle leads etc every time they are used and to report any damage immediately to the Property Management Group

3.8 GAS

The gas isolation valve is located in a wooden box located outside the Cornwall room. The gas boiler/heaters will be serviced regularly by a Gas Safe registered installer

3.9 WATER

The water supply to the kitchen and Little Fishes Preschool can be isolated by the valve in the corridor between the Print Room and Cornwall Room doors. All other water outlets can be isolated using the main stopcock in the street which is located in the pavement close to the junction of Shaftesbury Avenue and Barrington Road.

3.10 CLEANING MATERIALS

Most cleaning materials are kept in the cleaner's cupboard [CV1] which is kept locked and ensures they are kept out of the reach of children. Any cleaning materials in the kitchen are kept out of children's reach.

3.11 USE OF LADDERS

Ladders, even stepladders, are a common cause of injury, even death. Do not use any ladder unless you have thought carefully about whether you are doing so safely. If in doubt don't.

- A person should be accompanied when using any ladder (other than a small step ladder)
- Do not use a ladder when you are tired or unfit, or in distracting circumstances
- Ensure the ladder is suitable for the work to be undertaken, e.g. the correct size, wooden or fiberglass for electrical work
- Before use check the ladder is sound, and free from hazards such as; cracks, damaged rungs, sharp edges, splinters and missing footpads
- Carrying a ladder can be hazardous. Pay attention to the full length of the ladder avoiding collisions. Take care not to drop the ladder causing damage or injury
- The ladder should be placed on, and against, firm level surfaces where it will be stable at an angle of about 75° (1 in 4)
- If the ladder cannot be secured an adult should stand attentively with one foot on the bottom rung holding the upright stiles
- Wear strong footwear with good grip, don't over-stretch, and hold onto the ladder with at least one hand
- Take special care when up the ladder to avoid hazards such as electric shock or other minor injury

3.12 FOOD SAFETY

Not necessary as we do not prepare food on a regular basis

3.13 USE OF THE BUILDING BY LONE WORKERS & SMALL GROUPS

For lone workers and small groups:

- At least one person will need to be a key-holder
- Before leaving the building, ensure electrical appliances and all lights are turned off and the building is left secure, [see 3.5 above]

In addition:

Lone working

- Anyone in the building on their own should keep all doors locked
- It is recommended you have a mobile phone switched on and kept on your person at all time where possible
- It is advisable to tell someone when you will be in the church, and let them know when you have left the building

Opening to the public

- If the church is open to the public, a minimum of 2 people should be on duty (3 allows one person to take a break)
- At least one person should be close to the main doors at all times to welcome visitors and monitor them entering and leaving the building
- At least one person should have a mobile phone switched on and kept on their person
- Be vigilant for theft of items from the church and personal possessions
- All external hall doors should be kept locked during services

4. SCHEDULES

Schedule of events

Activity Responsible Renewal Next due

Activity	Responsible Person	When
Review Health and Safety policy	Bett Swierk	Annually
New leaders of groups to read and note H&S/Safeguarding and Fire Safety Policies	Wilma Smith	Upon signing contract
Review accident book	Bett Swierk	May & Nov
Check and re-stock first aid boxes	Val Gill	Annually or if reported used
Test fire alarm & emergency lighting	Bett Swierk	2 monthly
Service fire alarm (Craysfire)	Bett Swierk	Bi-Annually
Service fire extinguishers (Merryweather)	Bett Swierk	Annually
Fire drill	Bett Swierk	Bi-Annual
Portable appliance testing in the kitchen		Annually
Portable appliance testing other areas		3 yearly
Service gas boiler/heaters	Heating engineers	Annually

Key people

Role Name Contact

Property Management Group Chair - Position Vacant

Health & Safety Officer - Bett Swierk

First Aider(s) - Val Gill,

Fire Prevention Officer - Bett Swierk

Safeguarding Lead - Position Vacant

Safeguarding Deputy - Mary Redman

Reviewed and updated 3 October 2023

Next review due October 2024