

Breadsall Church Health and Safety Policy

Personal Safety

1. Introduction

Personal safety is something that we all need to be aware of, not only to consider the risks affecting us as individuals, but also to consider the welfare and safety of others. This is especially true in a place of worship and looking after everyone as we all come together is especially important. This document provides some guidance on how this can be achieved and areas of potential high risk.

2. Responsibilities

As a member of the Church's elected body the PCC have a duty of care to everyone entering the church premises whether it be church goers attending services, contractors or just members of the public. The fundamental process to address this is through risk assessments but it is also important to ensure that anyone entering the church premises also recognises that they have a responsibility and care to themselves and those around them and reporting hazards is a key part of this process. Personal safety goes even further and recognises that arriving, attending and leaving church also has potential risks and individuals need to be aware of these and be able to take any necessary actions to reduce and mitigate such risks which may endanger them or others. It is often more important to report a near miss or incident and enact on this leading indicator rather than focus on incidents that have already occurred, i.e. lagging metrics, therefore reporting and evaluating all incidents should be part of the Church's HSE regular review.

The key to personal safety in and around the church is to avoid situations where a threat to one's safety could occur. Areas to focus on specifically are listed below.

3. People in Church

The risk to personal safety is probably at its highest when people are in the church, especially on their own, and handling cash or dealing with other valuables. It is a prime target for thieves and mitigating actions must be taken. In this instance areas which may be considered are:

1. Always have more than one person in Church when dealing with money
2. Lock yourself in the vestry and only move money with somebody else in attendance
3. Do not make it obvious that you are transferring money out of the building and do this at different times during the week.
4. Have a personal alarm
5. Ensure that any cash is moved during daylight hours and avoid situations around the bank that appear dangerous, i.e. people loitering.
6. Evaluate risks where assaults could take place within the church, i.e. on tower tours, during church cleaning, flower arranging etc. and make sure no lone working is occurring and two or more people are conducting tours.
7. Limit access to church porches to prevent access to drug users and alcoholics who may become violent if asked to move.
8. Provide good lighting in and around the church to prevent hiding areas.

There must be a fully charged mobile phone available at all times.

4. People in the Memorial Hall or Outside Events

Similar observations as above apply equally well to when people are attending venues on behalf of the Church at outside events. Care should be taken not to leave one person alone counting funds

from stalls and transporting these funds to a safe haven. Car parks for these events should be well lit and care should be taken to try and ensure that cars are parked in these well-lit areas.

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5. People in the Churchyard

Churchyards have many areas that can be dangerous from the obvious trips and falls to creating areas for unscrupulous people to hide away. Care should be taken to ensure that when walking through the churchyard in the dark people should remain on the footpaths and in the well-lit areas. Again as above anyone walking through the premises at these times should ideally be accompanied to mitigate any risks.

There must be a fully charged mobile phone available at all times.

6. People at Home

This mainly affects the clergy but can have a lessor effect on the Churchwardens, who have people turn up at their house to pick up keys. Every precaution should be taken not to let people into the properties unless they can be vouched for or clearly if they are well known to the owner. Information sheets could be made and placed in or outside the church providing details of a number to call for information on church matters.

There must be a fully charged mobile phone available at all times.

7. Travelling between Home and Church

A common-sense approach must be taken when travelling either on foot or by car when travelling to and from the church. This should not be any different from other times in that walking in well-lit areas is recommended, shortcuts should only be taken at night if someone is with you and ideally you should keep to the main thoroughfares. If driving try to park as close to the church as possible to minimise the risk of attack between the car and the building.

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Health and Safety Committee, May 2017

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