

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY DOCUMENT

Approved by: Parochial Church Council
Date of approval: 29th July 2026
Originator: Steve Winch – (IOSH Cert)

THE PARISH OF ST NICHOLAS OTHAM WITH ST MARY'S LANGLEY

Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974

General Statement of Health & Safety Policy

Our policy is to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that:

- Health and safety risks arising from our activities are adequately controlled.
- Staff, Officers and volunteers are consulted on matters affecting their health, safety, and welfare.
- Plant and equipment are safe, when used, and properly maintained.
- Safe methods of handling and using hazardous substances are provided.
- Staff, Officers and volunteers are provided with information, instruction, training and supervision, to ensure they are properly managed and competent to do their tasks safely.
- Systems are provided to minimise the risk of accidents and related ill health.
- Safe and healthy working conditions, and environment, are provided and properly maintained.
- Congregation, visitors, and others who may use the church, churchyard or any other building we are responsible for, are not harmed by our activities. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions, where they apply.

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

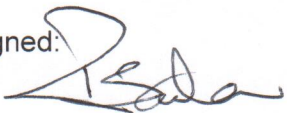
We will appoint a member of the PCC to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. To keep matters under review, we will include 'Health and Safety' as a standing item on the agenda for all meetings of the PCC. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

Signed:  Peter Callway
Chair of the PCC

Date: 16th August 2026

Signed:  Steve Christmas
Churchwarden

Date: 16th August 2026

Signed:  Rhian Banham
Churchwarden

Date: 16th August 2026

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Organisation and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Incumbent:

- The incumbent, or in their absence the churchwardens, has overall responsibility for Health & Safety, and will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy Health & Safety Regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. The incumbent may, as necessity dictates, delegate certain responsibilities to other church members.

Responsibility of the Churchwardens and the PCC H&S appointed person:

- It is the responsibility of the Churchwardens and the PCC appointed person to ensure that arrangements laid out in this policy are carried out, and as necessary updated, and for the day-to-day administration of H&S matters.

Responsibility of the PCC - Parochial Church Council:

- The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the Health & Safety Policy is implemented, to preside on matters as they arise, and to regularly review this and other Health & Safety policies and documents.

Responsibility of staff Officers and voluntary workers:

Staff, Officers and volunteers, have a legal responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care of their own, and others, health and safety while undertaking tasks.
- Co-operate with senior staff or churchwardens on all health and safety matters.
- Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety.
- Report all health and safety concerns to a churchwarden or PCC member.
- Report all accidents and incidences, however minor, whether resulting in an injury or a near miss, and to report any potential safety hazard.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The PCC of St Nicholas Otham & St Mary Langley may from time to time directly employ a range of professional persons. For the purpose of managing health and safety, and others, to carry out specific tasks. All such persons must co-operate fully with This Health and Safety Policy (as required by the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999).

Specific Arrangements

Asbestos

A survey must be carried out to check if there are any asbestos containing materials (ACMs) in any of our premises. This is used, in conjunction with an Asbestos Register, to inform maintenance workers or other contractors, of the presence or absence of ACMs. All contractors are required to read and sign the Register.

Accident and ill Health Reporting and First Aid

- All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book, which is kept at each premises
- RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. All reportable accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to be reported to the enforcing authority by a responsible person immediately by telephone, following which a written report must be completed using the form F2508.
The following is a summary of the injuries or occurrences that must be reported. (For further information, refer to the regulations, or contact the HSE or Environmental Health Officer):
 - (i) Any fatality to employees or non-employees, including volunteers.
 - (ii) Major injuries to employees (this includes fractures, amputations, dislocations, loss of sight, electric shock, exposure to harmful substances, any injury resulting in admission to hospital for more than 24 hours, and any accident that causes more than three consecutive days off work).
 - (iii) Injuries to non-employees that require the injured person to be taken straight to hospital for treatment.
- All accidents and work-related causes of sickness/absence are to be investigated.
- First Aid boxes to be kept at each premises and regularly inspected.

Bell Ringing

We will ensure that adequate precautions are in place to protect bellringers and others, who may enter the ringing room and bell 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.

Child Protection

- We have a policy relating specifically to the protection of children in line with recommendations issued by the Church of England.
- All matters relating to child protection should be addressed to the child protection officer.
- We undertake to discuss and review the policy annually.
- A permanent record will be maintained of all incidents involving children.

Churchyard

We will ensure that boundary walls and gates are kept in good repair. Where appropriate, we will have trees inspected by a competent person and have any necessary work carried out to make them safe. Headstones, tombs and monuments will be checked regularly to ensure they are properly maintained. Where our churchyard is formally closed, we will report any concerns to the Local Authority or Parish Council.

Contractors

Anyone entering the premises for the purpose of carrying out work, other than an employee or volunteer, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- Have their own Health & Safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy.
- Have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance and be able to provide a copy.
- Comply with this Health and Safety Policy and co-operate with church officials in providing a safe place of work, and safe systems of operation.
- Show evidence that all plant and machinery brought onto our premises has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.
- Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons that are not directly employed by them, with the express permission of church officials. Where permission is granted, responsibility will remain at all times with the contractor.
- All contractors will be issued with a 'permit to work' and must follow instructions regarding the areas of work, and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake, as well as comply with any specific safety precautions that may be outlined.
- If a contractor is to undertake 'hot work' such as braising, grinding or any work where sparks or heat could be generated, then work must not start until a 'hot work permit' has been issued. This will stipulate the areas, times and the nature of the 'hot work' that is permitted; further permits may need to be requested if the work is to continue, or if the nature of the work changes.

DSE (Display Screen Equipment)

DSE users will be provided with suitable training and assessments and workstations will be properly set up, used and maintained to reduce the risks of injury and ill health.

Electrical Safety:

- A list of portable appliances is to be maintained, and all appliances are to be tested annually by a suitably competent person.
- The lightning conductor, where installed, will be inspected and tested annually.
- Every 5 years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or other approved body, and any necessary remedial work will be carried out.
- It is our policy not to sell second hand electrical goods unless they have been inspected and tested by a suitably qualified person, and a register of such equipment is kept.
- Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. All staff Officers and volunteers must observe the following:
 - (i) Visually check all electrical equipment before use.
 - (ii) Report all faults immediately to a Churchwarden.
 - (iii) Do not attempt to use, or repair, faulty equipment.
 - (iv) Do not bring or use electrical equipment onto the premises until they have been tested by a suitably competent person.
 - (v) Where possible, electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use.
 - (vi) Flexible cables should be positioned and protected, so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard, and are not susceptible to damage.

Fire Safety:

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order 2005). In order to achieve this, The Churchwarden(s) and PCC H&S representative are responsible for ensuring that:

- A fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Escape routes are regularly checked.
- Fire extinguishers are inspected annually.
- Fire detection equipment and emergency lighting, etc, is checked at appropriate intervals.
- Emergency evacuation is tested at least twice yearly.

Gas Safety:

- Where installed, Gas Boilers and any other gas equipment are maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor, who is a GAS SAFE registered installer. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.
- No member of staff, officer or volunteer is to interfere with any gas equipment on the premises.
- Report all faults immediately to a Churchwarden.
- Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.

Hazardous Substances

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) Churchwarden's will be responsible for:

- Identifying all substances which need a COSHH assessment.
- Undertaking and regularly reviewing COSHH assessments, and for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented.
- Ensuring that substances are kept secured, and that appropriate control procedures are in place and observed.

Information and Training

H&S training where appropriate will be provided for all staff, including volunteers:

- Training will be identified and monitored by churchwardens and the PCC's H&S representative.

Lone working

- Persons must not work on their own unless they have means of communication and have notified a colleague of the work that is being undertaken.
- A risk assessment should be completed for all instances of lone working.
- A system of regular checking of anyone lone working must be employed.

Manual Handling

It is our policy to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable, but where this is not possible, risk assessments, appropriate control measures, and training, etc, will be provided to minimise risks.

Personal Safety and Security

- Appropriate systems are provided, e.g. external building lighting, lightening protection system, to ensure within reason, the safety of staff and other users of church premises.
- Risk assessments should be undertaken of such activities as:
 - Accepting people into a private home,
 - Journeys to any from church premises by vulnerable persons
 - Handling of cash and valuables.
- Churchwardens have responsibility for the security of staff and others who use church premises, including the congregation and members of the general public.

Plant, Premises and Equipment

The Churchwardens have overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that church premises, including external areas, are maintained to a safe condition.
- Identifying the equipment and plant needing maintenance.
- Ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up, implemented and logged.
- Checking that new plant and equipment meets H&S standards before it is purchased or put into use.
- A register of Dangerous Equipment to be kept along with lists of suitably trained operators.
- Staff, Officers and volunteers must ensure the following:
 - (i) That they do not operate plant or machinery that they are not authorised or trained to use.
 - (ii) That machinery is switched off when not in use.
 - (iii) That guards are replaced after maintenance, before the plant or machinery is used.
 - (iv) That they check the plant or machinery, is in safe working condition.
 - (v) That where appropriate personal protective equipment is used.
 - (vi) That no person under the age of 18 is allowed to use any power-driven item of plant or machinery, however, the use of hand tools is permitted.
 - (vii) That any defect is reported immediately to the Churchwarden and that defective equipment is put out of use with a suitable label attached.

Preparation of food

- We ensure that we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs.
- We ensure that all food handlers have received adequate supervision, instruction and training.
- We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the food to be prepared and stored, including storage at the correct temperatures.
- Where food is prepared off site, all reasonable precautions are taken to ensure hygiene standards are maintained.
- We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

Risk Assessments and H&S inspections

- Risk assessments are required by the Management of H&S at Work Regulations 1999, and will be undertaken by the appropriate persons on a regular basis.
- The findings of these assessments will be reported to Staff and Officers.
- Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by the Incumbent, Churchwarden or PCC H&S representative, as appropriate.
- Those named in the risk assessments will be responsible for checking that the action required has been properly implemented.
- The incumbent, Churchwarden, or PCC H&S representative, will provide an overall check that the implemented actions have suitably removed or reduced the risks.
- Assessments will be reviewed, by the appropriate Staff member or Officer, annually or when the work activity changes, whichever is sooner.
- H&S checklist inspections will be carried out at regular intervals and appropriate actions taken.

Slips and Trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled may have in negotiating access. We will make periodic checks to ensure that floors, coverings, steps and pathways remain in good condition, free from obstruction and that any precautions (such as, handrails, lighting, etc.) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks we make. We will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

Working at Heights

- A register of ladders and access equipment is to be kept, along with a list of persons allowed to use them.
- Ladders and access equipment should be kept secure to prevent use by unauthorised persons.
- Ladders may only be used when other equipment such as scaffold towers or mobile elevated platforms cannot be used, and for work of short duration, so long as they can be safely secured.
- Risk assessments, appropriate control measures, and training, etc, will be provided to minimise risks.