

# GENEVA ROAD EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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## Section 1: HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. The church recognises and accepts its responsibilities for providing, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy environment with a view to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all those who use the church premises.
2. The church will, therefore, take all necessary steps within its power to meet its responsibilities so far as is reasonably practicable by, among other arrangements:
  - 2.1 maintaining the church premises in a condition that is safe and without risk to health and providing and maintaining means of access to and egress from it that are safe and without such risks;
  - 2.2 providing and maintaining furnishings and equipment which are safe and without risks to health;
  - 2.3 assessing the risk to the health and safety of those who use the church premises;
  - 2.4 ensuring the safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles of equipment, furniture and substances;
  - 2.5 the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety of those who use the church premises;
  - 2.6 the provision and maintenance of a proper environment for the church's employees, leaders, helpers, volunteers and church users that is safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare;
  - 2.7 arranging for suitable induction programmes and training; consulting, where necessary, with all employees, leaders, helpers and volunteers on the effectiveness and implementation of this policy; and any necessary changes;
  - 2.8 ensuring that adequate funds and resources are made available for carrying out this policy.
3. The church's charity trustees (the Deacons) have overall responsibility for health and safety. They have given responsibility for the fulfilment of this policy to Mr G S Friston as the church's Health and Safety Officer but subject hereto the charity trustees will be responsible for carrying out the implementation of the church's policy and for the issue of supplementary policy statements where this may be necessary.

4. The Health and Safety Officer will:
  - 4.1 carry out appropriate risk assessments (these to be reviewed annually) of the church's premises and activities and report to the church's charity trustees as necessary;
  - 4.2 co-ordinate the implementation of the church's Health and Safety Policy (including Fire Safety);
  - 4.3 carry out investigations of any accidents and recommend measures for preventing their recurrence;
  - 4.4 ensure that accident reports and other appropriate records are maintained and returned to the appropriate bodies;
  - 4.5 ensure that all appropriate arrangements are made to provide for first aid;
  - 4.6 ensure that all food safety legislation is complied with;
  - 4.7 arrange safety training courses, as may be necessary or desirable, so that specific legal requirements are adhered to and that any changes in such requirements are complied with and communicated to employees, leaders, helpers and volunteers as necessary;
  - 4.8 ensure that, where necessary, all relevant safety regulations are prominently displayed, that all emergency procedure notices are properly exhibited and clearly visible at all times;
  - 4.9 ensure that access to and from emergency exits and fire equipment are not impaired and that corridors and stairs are kept free from obstructions other than of a temporary and partial nature.
5. All volunteers, ministers, employees, leaders, and helpers will:
  - 5.1 take reasonable care of their health and safety, and of the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by a person's act or omissions while working or helping;
  - 5.2 as regards any duty or requirement imposed on the church or any person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, co-operate with the church so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with;
  - 5.3 ensure that they shall not intentionally or recklessly either interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare, in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions;
  - 5.4 make themselves familiar with and conform to the Health and Safety Policy of the church at all times;
  - 5.5 observe all safety rules, procedures, and codes of practice at all times, and in particular be fully conversant with the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire or any other emergency;

- 5.6 conform to all the food safety regulations that are applicable to themselves;
- 5.7 co-operate with the church to enable it to carry out the duties and requirements under the provisions of all health and safety legislation, including participating in any initial or other training if called upon to do so;
- 5.8 report to the church's Health and Safety Officer all accidents or hazardous occurrences or dangers whether persons are injured or not as soon as is reasonably practicable;
- 5.9 ensure that all working equipment and materials used by them are in a safe and serviceable condition and that no cables or wires are left in such a position as to be likely to cause anyone to trip;
- 5.10 have regard to the possible consequences of their actions on the health, safety and welfare of all those persons who at any time and for whatever purpose may or will use the church premises.

This policy statement was adopted by a resolution at a Church Members' Meeting dated 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

## Section 2 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

Precautions should be taken to ensure the risk of fires is reduced. This can be best achieved by good safety practices:

1. Smoking is not permitted in any of the church buildings.
2. Designated evacuation routes and corridors must be kept clear of all obstructions.
3. Anything which could potentially create a fire hazard should be reported to the Deacons immediately.
4. Fire-fighting equipment is to be serviced annually and advice taken from the service engineer on the extent of equipment necessary.
5. For all meetings on the church site the main church entrance door should be unlocked internally and the doors from the porch into the main church and from the church hall into the corridor should also be unlocked to provide an alternate evacuation route. Once unlocked internally, the main church entrance door can be opened by pressing on the crash bar. This is the responsibility of meeting leaders and, for Lord's Day services, the Deacon on door duty.

### **Designated Evacuation Routes**

From the main church:

1. Through the door at the right-hand side of the stage in the church into the corridor and out via the Sunday school hall entrance;
2. Through the doors from the church into the porch and out via the main church entrance.

From the rear hall and other rooms at the rear of the church buildings:

1. Through the double doors from the rear hall, through the cloakroom into the corridor and out via the rear hall entrance;
2. Through the doors along the corridor wall in the rear hall into the corridor and out through the main church or via the rear hall entrance.

## Assembly Point

The designated assembly point is the church car park, as far away from the buildings as is possible. Meeting leaders are to account for everyone present and report to the Church Secretary or the Deacons in his absence.

## Location of Fire Fighting Equipment

1. Porch: Under the shelf by the library door. Water extinguisher
2. Church cloakroom: wall mounted. CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher
3. Rear hall cloakroom: wall mounted. Water extinguisher
4. Kitchen: wall mounted by door. CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher & fire blanket
5. Church: wall mounted. CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher

**Water extinguishers** are for use on wood, paper, textile and solid material fires. They must not be used on liquid, electrical or metal fires.

**CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers** are to be used on liquid and electrical fires. They must not be used on metal fires.

## Fire Action - If you discover a fire:

1. Warn everyone by shouting "fire" several times.
2. Meeting leaders and Deacons all carry whistles to sound a warning. Give three blasts of the whistle to alert others.
3. Ensure evacuation routes are free from fire and advise people to evacuate accordingly.
4. Ensure wheelchair users, pushchair users and those with mobility difficulties are escorted to safety.
5. If you feel it is safe, tackle the fire using available fire-fighting equipment but do not endanger your life or those of others. **If you are unsure evacuate the building.**
6. If unable to extinguish the fire quickly evacuate the building.
7. Meeting leaders or Deacons should call the Fire Brigade.

## On hearing a shout of "fire" or the whistles

1. If time allows, close all doors and windows and switch off any electrical/cooking equipment. This will contain the spread of smoke and flames.
2. Leave the room immediately closing the door behind you.
3. Leave the building by the nearest available exit and go straight to the church car park.

**DO NOT** stop to collect personal belongings.

**DO NOT** re-enter the buildings until told it is safe to do so.

## **What you can do now**

Identify the location of the fire exits, evacuation routes, fire extinguishers and assembly point.

## **Meeting leader and Deacons' duties**

1. Meeting leaders / Deacons should unlock the main church entrance door and the doors from the porch into the main church and from the church into the corridor prior to the commencement of any meeting in the church buildings.
2. Meeting leaders should ensure that all meeting helpers are aware of fire precautions including the means of alternative escape.
3. On the sounding of an alarm meeting leaders should check that all rooms including toilets have been evacuated.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANYONE BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO ROOMS UNTIL THE 'ALL CLEAR' HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED.**

4. Meeting leaders should call the Fire Brigade.
5. Meeting leaders should account for all people present at meetings and ensure that all are at the assembly point. This should be reported to the Church Secretary, or in his absence to a Deacon, at the assembly point.

## Section 3: FIRST AID AND THE REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS

**There is no legal requirement for churches to have a first aider present at their services or at their meetings for either adults or children.**

### **First Aid box**

The First Aid box is located in the top left cupboard in the church kitchen.

### **Accident Reporting**

All accidents should be recorded in the Accident book which is kept alongside the First Aid book in the top left cupboard in the kitchen. Every accident needs to be entered in the Accident book and all sections fully completed.

All equipment that is damaged must be reported. If any equipment has been damaged this needs to be assessed for safety. The equipment that has been damaged may cause someone else to have an accident.

All accidents will be investigated so it is very important you enter the contact details of the person injured and the person treating the injury.

The law requires us to report major accidents to the Health & Safety Officer.

## Section 4: HAZARDS WITHIN THE CHURCH PREMISES

### ELECTRICAL

- All portable electrical appliances, cables/plugs must be checked and, where relevant, tested every 5 years, apart from extension cables and the hoover which must be tested annually. (Portable Appliance Test known as PAT testing).
- If for any reason an electrical appliance is brought onto the premises it must have a current PAT test certification attached or available. The test certification to be current. This requirement is to be made known to all visiting speakers but a common-sense approach should be taken when dealing with missionaries on deputation.
- Battery operated appliances are not included.
- If you see an appliance on the premises that is faulty or damaged you must alert one of the Deacons.

### GAS APPLIANCES

- All the gas appliances are to be tested every 12 months. This is to ensure the appliances are safe to use.
- No other gas appliances are to be brought onto the premises without agreement with the safety officer or agreement of the Deacons.

### MANUAL HANDLING

- Before lifting any object ensure you assess how heavy it is. If the item looks heavy or by initial feel is seen to be too heavy, do not lift it until sufficient help is available.
- Remove any obstructions from the route that a load is to be carried. Consider whether carrying distances can be shortened by allowing for resting the load on a bench or table.
- Lift in the correct way to ensure you do not injure yourself. Adopt a stable position to lift making sure the feet are apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance.
- When lifting or carrying avoid twisting, overreaching and stooping. Keep the load close to the waist with the heaviest side next to the body.
- Do not drag heavy items across floors, as this may damage the item, floor surfaces and lead to accidents or expensive repairs.
- For stability and safety, chairs should be neatly stacked, no more than 6 chairs high and folding tables placed into the moving storage cradle and locked in the storage cupboard.

## WORKING AT HEIGHT

The purpose of Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR) is to prevent death and injury from a fall from height. Work at height means work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

You are working at height if you:

- are working on a ladder or a flat roof;
- could fall through a fragile surface;
- could fall into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

Take a sensible approach when considering precautions for work at height. There may be some low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary and the law recognises this.

Before working at height you must work through these simple steps:

- do as much work as possible from the ground;
- avoid work at height where it is reasonably practicable to do so;
- ensure you can get safely to and from where you need to work at height;
- where work at height cannot be avoided, prevent falls using either an existing place of work that is already safe or the right type of equipment;
- minimise the distance and consequences of a fall, by using the right type of equipment where the risk cannot be eliminated;
- ensure equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly.

Once working at height:

- make sure you don't overload or overreach;
- take precautions when working on or near fragile surfaces;
- provide protection from falling objects;
- consider your emergency evacuation and rescue procedures.

Those in control of any work at height activity must make sure work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people. This includes using the right type of equipment for working at height. Those in control must first assess the risks.

Take a sensible, pragmatic approach when considering precautions for work at height. Factors to weigh up include:

- the height of the task;
- the duration and frequency;
- the condition of the surface being worked on.

There will also be certain low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary.

The following are all requirements in law that you need to consider when planning and undertaking work at height. You must:

- take account of weather conditions that could compromise worker safety;
- check that the place (e.g. a roof) where work at height is to be undertaken is safe. Each place where people will work at height needs to be checked every time, before use;
- stop materials or objects from falling or, if it is not reasonably practicable to prevent objects falling, take suitable and sufficient measures to make sure no one can be injured, e.g. use exclusion zones to keep people away or mesh on scaffold to stop materials such as bricks falling off;
- store materials and objects safely so they won't cause injury if they are disturbed or collapse;
- plan for emergencies and rescue, e.g. agree a set procedure for evacuation. Think about foreseeable situations and make sure employees know the emergency procedures. Don't just rely entirely on the emergency services.

When selecting equipment for work at height, you must provide the most suitable equipment appropriate for the work by taking account of factors such as:

- the working conditions (e.g. weather);
- the nature, frequency and duration of the work;
- the risks to the safety of everyone where the work equipment will be used.

Work equipment, for example scaffolding, needs to be assembled or installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and in keeping with industry guidelines. Where the safety of the work equipment depends on how it has been installed or assembled, an employer should ensure it is not used until it has been inspected in that position by a competent person who has the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to manage health and safety.

When planning new-build or refurbishment projects, architects and designers have duties under The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, to consider the need for work to be carried out at height over the lifespan of a building, e.g. to clean, maintain and repair it. They should design out the need to work at height if at all possible.

## **LONE WORKING**

- A person should consider the risks of working alone either at church or in the community before embarking on such an activity.
- Anyone working on their own on the church premises should notify another person of when they are working alone at the church, at what time they are expected to return, and should notify that person once they have ceased working alone.
- Anyone working alone on the church premises should not attempt to carry out any hazardous work, including work with hazardous chemicals, or work at a height.
- Anyone working alone on the church premises should ensure that the church doors are locked to maintain their personal safety. They should carry a mobile telephone at all times to summon help if need be.
- When working in the community, such as on visitation or door to door work, ensure that the risk of violence is considered and a safe exit route is identified.

## **CHEMICALS AND OTHER HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES**

Do not bring chemicals onto the premises without authorisation. The chemicals that are on the premises are kept locked away. Remember children are on the premises regularly and often cannot read labels or assess risk.

In general, the products at GREBC do not present any major risk as long as you follow these rules:

- All products must be used in accordance with the instructions written on the container or supplied with it;
- Never leave cleaning substances around the premises but ensure they are stored in the appropriate cupboard in the kitchen;
- The kitchen door must remain locked at all times when the kitchen is unoccupied to prevent children accessing the cleaning materials. A bolt on the top of the exterior of the kitchen door will prevent access;
- Children should not enter the kitchen when it is in use unless actively supervised by an adult.

## **THE BAPTISTRY**

- The baptistry is to remain closed unless it is specifically opened up for use in a service or is drying out after use.
- When the baptistry is open a warning to parents shall be given in the church notices to the effect that they should ensure that their children do not go near the baptistry.
- The baptistry shall be filled with water in preparation for a baptismal service and regular checks must be maintained on the water level whilst it is being filled.
- The baptistry is currently heated by means of portable electric immersion heaters which must be secured before being switched on. Once they are on, no-one is to touch the water surface.

- No electrical equipment shall be used in the immediate vicinity of the baptistry when it is open and filled unless it is adequately secured to prevent it falling into the water.
- Two church officers shall be present in the water at all baptisms. One must assist the candidate into the water, to prevent slipping, and both must lower and then lift the candidate into and out of the water. One must assist the candidate to exit the baptistry.
- Any surface water in the corridors following a baptism must be mopped immediately.

## Section 5: FOOD HYGIENE

Geneva Road Evangelical Baptist Church falls under the authority of Darlington Borough Council who assess food hygiene on the premises. At the present time the church has a 5 star rating.

Full details about food hygiene can be found in the Food Hygiene Instruction Folder and Records which can be found in the kitchen.

## Section 6: CHURCH CLEANING

GREBC does not have a caretaker. All church members are responsible for ensuring that the church is kept clean and tidy.

Regular cleaning is carried out by members and others on a rota basis. Two people are nominated to carry out the church cleaning for two weeks at a time. The rota is published quarterly and placed on the church notice board and responsibility for the week's cleaning and for the following week is also detailed in the written church notices.

Meeting leaders are responsible for ensuring that rooms are left tidy for the next people to use. This includes picking up of litter, sweeping floors where necessary, ensuring the toilets are clean and ensuring that all equipment, taps, gas and lights are switched off and all doors are locked.

## Section 7: PEST CONTROL

The church has a pest control contract with an external professional which provides for 6-weekly checks to see if there is any rodent activity and deal with it if necessary. Pest control records are kept in a folder in the top right-hand cupboard in the vestry.

If any rodent activity is seen it must be reported to the Deacons immediately.