

# Health and Safety Policy

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and the regulations made under it.

The policy is in three sections:

**Section A** – General statement of policy

**Section B** – Organisation and responsibilities

**Section C** – Arrangements

## **Note**

**To all staff, voluntary helpers and contractors:**

*The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety.*

## **STRANDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH**

**1 Clonallon Court, Belfast BT4 2AB**

**Properties: the main church building, the new hall and the land adjacent to both comprising car parks and access routes around both buildings.**

**Date: July 2022**

**Review date: June 2023**

# A - General statement of policy

Our policy, as far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our staff, contractors and voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will also endeavour to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and all others who may visit the church, church grounds and any associated buildings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement this policy are set out below.

This policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed regularly and the appropriate changes made.

Separate risk assessments will be maintained for specific events and occurrences and will be supplemental to this document.

In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, health and safety will be a standing agenda item of all meetings of the Trustees, and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Reviewed and agreed by Strandtown Baptist Church Trustees on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed .....

Signed .....

Signed .....

Signed .....

# B - Organisation and Responsibilities

## **Responsibility of the Trustees and Staff**

Overall responsibility for Health and Safety is that of the Trustees on behalf of the church membership. The Trustees will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice, to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented, the arrangements outlined in this policy are updated as necessary, and regular updates provided to the Church membership as appropriate. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church staff (or other appropriately designated person) as appropriate including but not limited to the regular weekly and monthly fire safety checks. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified to the Trustees and the policy amended accordingly.

### **A Health and Safety Officer (to be appointed) will:**

- 1** Be familiar with health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises and activities.
- 2** Be familiar with the church health and safety policy and arrangements therein.
- 3** Provide advice and guidance and advise on the conducting of suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk to the health and safety of those who use the church premises and identification of appropriate controls.
- 4** Conduct investigations of any accidents and recommend measures for preventing their recurrence.
- 5** Ensure that accident reports and other appropriate records are maintained and reported to the appropriate bodies.

### **Responsibility of Ministry / Group Leaders**

Ministry Leaders / Group Leaders have responsibility to ensure arrangements detailed in this policy are implemented within their groups including undertaking risk assessments appropriate to their event or activity while on church business or premises.

The Compliance and Facilities' Deacon has responsibility to ensure that regular inspections of church premises, grounds and equipment are conducted to identify potential hazards or lack of control, and ensure suitable remedial actions are taken.

### **Responsibility of staff and voluntary workers**

All staff and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises.

Staff and voluntary workers must:

- 1 Comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.
- 2 Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
- 3 Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately.
- 4 Report any breakages, faults, hazards and potential risks to the office and/or the Compliance and Facilities' Deacon.
- 5 Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
- 6 Not misuse any equipment, facility or other material in the interests of health and safety.

## C - Arrangements

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of staff, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors.

### **First Aid**

The location of First Aid Boxes will be clearly identified, and their availability provided to all users of the premises. The Office Manager will regularly maintain the condition and contents of the First Aid Boxes. During church services the Sunday operations deacons will be responsible for First Aid.

All Ministry Leaders should endeavour to have a designated First Aider present during activities. All Ministry Leaders should make themselves aware of the location of First Aid boxes and their contents. It would be advisable for Ministry Leaders to identify team members who may undertake specific training in the use of EpiPens and the defibrillator.

A defibrillator is installed under the stairs in the main church building. It is checked on a regular basis, batteries replaced and maintained accordingly.

### **Accident Reporting**

Once any injuries are appropriately treated and the area made safe, all accidents must be reported to the person responsible for the activity and other appropriate persons dependent upon the seriousness of the accident.

In the case of an admission to hospital (either ED and / or Inpatient care) the Office Manager must be informed, the Trustees appraised, and our insurance company notified by advising our designate liaison (circa July 2022 – Beverlie Jones).

The responsible person will complete an entry to the Accident Book, which is kept in the church office. The responsible person will submit the tear out report to the church office and will inform the Health and Safety Officer at the earliest opportunity.

In addition, near misses, hazards and unsafe conditions are to be reported by completing an entry in the Incident Report Book (or Near Miss Book) or will complete a record using the Incident Report Form at Appendix A. The form must be sent to the Health and Safety Officer at the earliest opportunity.

An Accident is defined as an unfortunate incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, typically resulting in damage or injury.

An Incident is defined as an **unintended event that disturbs normal operations** or an unplanned, undesired event that adversely affects completion of a task.

Accident Reports and Incident Reports are reviewed by the Health and Safety Officer, who will report regularly to the Trustees.

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) there is a statutory requirement to report certain types of accident, dangerous occurrences and disease to the enforcing authorities. Where necessary, these reports will be submitted by the Health and Safety Officer, or a person so designated by them.

## **Fire safety**

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under all regulatory and legislative fire safety measures. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

- assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated building and the risks to our neighbours;
- a check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned;
- ensure that people who may be in the building can get out safely including, if necessary, the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage;
- to provide firefighting equipment;
- ensure that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire;
- checks of the premises before occupation and prior to locking up to ensure no fire risk exists;
- a regular check that our firefighting equipment is in place and is serviceable.

## **Fire extinguishers**

Fire extinguishers are kept in the locations detailed in Schedule 2.

The extinguishers noted are checked regularly by a member of the Staff Team to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged.

A specialist fire protection company annually checks the extinguishers.

## **Evacuation procedure**

All staff and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

Those with reduced mobility will be identified by the Ministry Leaders (or those responsible for gatherings which are not stewarded) and appropriate assistance arranged.

For large events, stewarding/evacuation arrangements are as follows:

- 1 All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences and be clearly marked as fire exits using the 'Running Man' symbol.
- 2 A check must be made that all doors can be opened.
- 3 A trained Fire Warden must be allotted to each door and have responsibility for persons in a specific part of the church.
- 4 Responsibility for using each fire extinguisher will be allotted to named and trained Fire Wardens.
- 5 If emergency lighting is not available, torches must be available to each Fire Warden and kept in good working order in the evacuation box.
- 6 The evacuation arrangements will be announced at the start of each large event. For Sunday Services, the arrangements will be announced at a service once per quarter.
- 7 In the event of an emergency (fire/bomb threat, etc.), an announcement to leave the building will be made by the Service Leader, Pastor or a Trustee.
- 8 Persons will assemble in the turning circle above the top car park in Clonallon Court.
- 9 The emergency services will be contacted immediately by the Fire Warden or an appointed person.

Fire Safety Solutions (NI) will annually conduct Fire Risk Assessments.  
Fire extinguisher checks and repair will be conducted annually by NW Fire Safety.  
ESS will maintain the Fire Alarm.

### **Electrical safety**

- 1 Portable electrical equipment will be assessed (by the Compliance and Facilities' Deacon or Health and Safety Officer) and inspected according to a schedule based on risk (includes PAT testing as appropriate by a competent person).
- 2 Plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected before use by the user to ensure that there are no visible defects including loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any required repairs will be reported to the Office Manager by email and items put out of use until repaired or replaced.
- 3 Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a 'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT. Any necessary remedial work will be conducted.
- 4 At intervals of not more than two and a half years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent firm.
- 5 It is our policy not to sell or donate any second-hand electrical goods.
- 6 Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill. All staff and voluntary workers must observe the following:
  - (i) visually check all electrical equipment before use
  - (ii) report required repairs to the Office Manager

- (iii) do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment
- (iv) no electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been assessed as per item 1 of this section.
- (v) electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for extended periods
- (vi) flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

### **Gas equipment safety**

All gas equipment (ie boilers in the main church and new hall) is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register.

Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

### **Hazardous substances**

The Compliance and Facilities' Deacon will maintain a list of hazardous substances kept on the premises.

Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, our safety arrangements are as follows:

For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment, data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers are used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, and action to take in the event of an accident

### **Safety of plant and equipment**

The Compliance and Facilities' Deacon will maintain a list of all items of plant and equipment. The procedures for checking and rules for use are as follows:

- 1 Staff and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.
- 2 Staff and voluntary workers must not ride on any parts of machinery not intended for that use.
- 3 Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made.
- 4 After conducting maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used.
- 5 Before using any item of plant or machinery, a check must be made to ensure it is in a safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects.
- 6 The appropriate personal protective equipment detailed below must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery.
- 7 Persons under the age of eighteen may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power-driven item of plant or machinery.

- 8 Ladders may only be used as a last resort when other equipment such as tower scaffolds or mobile elevated work platforms cannot be used and for work of short duration provided they can be safely secured.
- 9 Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person.
- 10 All plant and equipment will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.
- 11 Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on.

### **Slips, trips and falls – condition of floors, steps and paths**

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made regularly by the Compliance and Facilities' Deacon of:

- 1 all floors and stairs in the church and buildings; and
- 2 all paths and steps in the grounds.

Any defects or potential problems will be reported to the Office Manager and arrangements will be made for repairs or remedial measures to be conducted.

In addition, the Compliance and Facilities' Deacon will coordinate arrangements for the clearing of paths in the event of accumulation of moss, algae and leaves and after snow falls or during icy conditions.

The Compliance and Facilities' Deacon will ensure that the shrubbery and gardens surrounding the church, including but not limited to hedges will be subject to regular upkeep and maintenance.

### **Lighting**

Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported to the Office Manager via email or via a note left on the board outside the church office. They will ensure that the bulbs are replaced following all appropriate safety procedures.

### **Working at height**

All activities working at height must be subject to risk assessment. In most cases this will mean work will only be undertaken by appropriately qualified and equipped specialist contractors, who will be responsible for specifying the safe method of working.

### **Kitchen Area / Preparation of food**

- 1 We ensure that we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs. (see <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/foodratings#254-1>)



- 2 We ensure that the team leader has received appropriate training and they disseminate supervision, instruction and training to all food handlers.
- 3 We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is conducted for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures
- 4 Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and sanitised.
- 5 Food stuffs will only be prepared in the kitchen areas
- 6 We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and food hygiene procedures
- 7 Access to kitchen area is controlled to restrict potential for accidental contact with hot surfaces, boiling liquids and sharp implements.

### **Manual handling – lifting, carrying and moving loads**

- 1 Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable
- 2 Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will conduct risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts and hoists as far as possible
- 3 The necessary training will be given to all those staff and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling
- 4 Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks.

### **Display screen equipment**

Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer workstations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible.

The following factors will be considered when conducting risk assessments:

- stability and legibility of the screen
- contrast and brightness of the screen
- tilt and swivel of the screen
- suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs
- the workstation environment
- the user-friendliness of the software

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen. Where necessary, the Health and Safety Officer will conduct risk assessments.

Any staff requiring specific aids to assist them to perform their duties will be asked to identify same and reasonable steps will be taken to provide same.

### **Buildings/glazing**

- 1 The buildings are inspected regularly by the Compliance and Facilities' Deacon.
- 2 Any defects noted are immediately reported to the Office Manager and the procedures put in hand for repairs.

- 3 Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be conducted.
- 4 A check is made of all glazing in the buildings to ensure that any glass in windows below waist height and in doors and beside doors below shoulder height is of a safety material or is protected against breakage.

## **Sharps**

Needles, and other paraphernalia associated with illicit drug use, may be discarded on the premises. If encountered, the area will be secured to prevent others, including children, touching the items, which may be contaminated. A supply of disposable tweezers is available to transfer the items to a designated Sharps Container (located in the office). Arrangements for disposal of items will be made when sufficient quantity collected.

## **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments will be conducted for all activities that carry a significant risk by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. The following are examples of activities that will require risk assessments.

- Community gatherings including the use of BBQs
- sponsored walks, visits and outings
- church maintenance conducted by volunteers
- roof maintenance
- use of sports equipment

## **Risk assessments – Contractors**

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of conducting work, other than a staff member or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor.

For all hazardous activities, the contractor/s will need to conduct risk assessments and introduce procedures that must be followed. A contractor must be able to provide the church with a copy of the risk assessment upon request. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- 1 Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same.
- 2 Produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained.
- 3 Comply with all the requirements of this Health and Safety policy and co-operate with the Trustees in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.
- 4 Where plant and machinery are brought onto the church premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and assessed to ensure its safe operation.

- 5 Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the Trustees. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.
- 6 All contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. This 'permit to work' will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.

These terms and conditions will be checked by the person hiring the contractor on behalf of the Church.

### **Risk assessments - Users of the Church**

For all activities, other users of the church premises need to conduct risk assessments and introduce procedures that must be followed and be able to provide a copy of them on request. The following are examples of activities that will require risk assessments:

- children's parties
- sponsored walks, visits and outings
- any event where a child / young person may stray beyond the church rooms and grounds.

### **Information and enforcement**

Belfast City Council  
Health and Safety Unit  
Cecil Ward Building  
4-10 Linenhall Street,  
Belfast

Telephone: 028 90320202

Email: [safety@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:safety@belfastcity.gov.uk)

### **Health and Safety Law poster**

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law - what you should know' is displayed in the Church Office and in the New Hall.

## Schedule 1 – Fire Protection Arrangements

### Fire Extinguishers – Locations

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Type</b>
1	Church Main Doors L	9litre	Water
2	Church Main Doors R	9litre	Water
3	Rear of Church L	9litre	Water
4	Rear of Church R	2kg	CO2
5	Front of Church Pillar L (Music Group side)	9.5litre	Water
6	Front of Church Pillar R (Office side)	3litre	AFFF Foam
7	Church Office	2kg	CO2
8		2kg	CO2
9		2kg	CO2
10		2kg	Powder
11		Std.	Fire Blanket
12		9litre	Water
13		3litre	AFFF Foam
14		2kg	CO2
15		Std.	Fire Blanket

## Schedule 2 – Regular Inspections/Testing

Inspection	Frequency	Responsible	Notes
Fire Extinguishers	Monthly	SBC staff	Inspect
Fire Extinguishers	Annually	NW Fire Safety	Arranged by Office Manager
Electrical plugs, cables, sockets	Quarterly	Compliance and Facilities' Deacon	Inspect
Fixed Electrical Installation	5-yearly	Specialist Co.	Arranged by Office Manager
Portable Electrical Equipment	Annual	Competent Person	Arranged by Office Manager
Portable Electrical Equipment	5-yearly	Specialist Co.	Arranged by Office manager
Lightning Conductor	2½ years	Specialist Co.	Arranged by Office Manager
Gas Appliances	Annual	Gas Safe Engineer	Arranged by Office Manager
Lighting	Monthly	Compliance and Facilities' Deacon	Inspect
Floors/Stairs/Paths/Steps	Quarterly	Compliance and Facilities' Deacon	Inspect
Building fabric including glazing	Quarterly	Compliance and Facilities' Deacon	Inspect

Appendix A

## **STRANDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH**

### **Hazard Report Form**

**Note: To report an accident, please use the Accident Book.  
Use this form to report a near miss, hazard or unsafe condition.**

Location of hazard / incident:

Description of hazard / incident:

Person completing this form:

Name:

Address:

Post code:

Telephone:

Signature:

Date:

- Please inform: The Office Manager of any incident / hazard at the earliest opportunity.  
Tel: 028 90808380  
email: [info@sbchurch.co.uk](mailto:info@sbchurch.co.uk)

Return this completed form to the church office, or when unstaffed post it into the church letter box.