

Health and Safety Policy

Primley United Reformed Church

Primley Road, Sidmouth

EX10 9LB

Primley URC is a place of Christian Worship situated within a residential area of the coastal town of Sidmouth, Devon. The church has a team of 3 serving Elders, who are church members and lead the business and spiritual needs of the church. There is approximately a church membership of 14 with approximately 6 other regular attendees.

The church is a relatively small, low risk single level environment, but we understand that we have a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church, hall or gardens. As an employer and landlord, we understand the need in certain circumstances to meet the requirements of Health and Safety law.

This policy is to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of any person who may use the church, hall or any other building for which we are responsible. This is in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply. The Church Synod (South West) accepts its overall responsibility for this. As a church we will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective.

Any decisions we make will have due regard for it.

There are now 3 paid employees: - a gardener, a cleaner and recently appointed Community Development Coordinator.

We are using HSE's template and will review the policy annually, or straight away if there are any significant changes within the church buildings or elsewhere which need to be accommodated.

We will appoint Elders / suitable persons to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. We will keep health and safety matters under review at appropriate intervals. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

It is the duty of each employee, volunteer and user to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be brought to their attention. We will try to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays his or her part in its implementation.

Policy Statement

Part 1:

Statement of intent

- minimise or prevent accidents and cases of work / leisure-related ill health
- manage health and safety risks in our church buildings
- provide clear instructions and information, to ensure both paid employees, volunteers, and all church/ hall users are safe.
- provide personal protective equipment if necessary for Church personnel.
- consult with any hall / church user on matters affecting their health and safety
- provide and maintain safe equipment
- encourage safe handling and use of substances
- maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- implement emergency procedures, including evacuation in case of fire or other significant incidents
- review and revise this policy regularly

Part 2:

Responsibilities for Health and Safety

Overall and final responsibility for Health and Safety:- The Elders.

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice:-
The Elders, all Church users and Hall users

The Elders will ensure that:-

All employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities

Adequate precautions are taken as set out in this policy and related risk assessment

Adequate information and training is provided for those that need it

Any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible

Where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger

All accidents are reported in-line with the requirements of this policy

Advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy

There is monitoring of accidents, ill-health work related investigation, emergency procedures, fire and evacuation procedures, maintenance of equipment, information, and instructions

Specialist health and safety assistance is obtained where necessary

Only competent persons are employed to carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests

Relevant health and safety documents and records are retained

They keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church

They set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

Part 3:

Arrangements for Health and Safety

Organisation and Responsibilities

All hall and church users, employees and volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or premises.

They will ensure that they:

- Read this policy and understand what is required of them
- Complete their work taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others
- Comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures
- Report any hazard, defect or damage, so that this might be dealt with
- Warn any new employees, volunteers or other persons of known hazards
- Attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely

- Do not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so
- Report any accident
- Do not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.
- All church / Hall / Group Leaders should carry out their own risk assessment as may be applicable to their group or situation.

Risk Assessment

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

We will review risk assessments at least bi-annually or when working habits or conditions change

Fire Safety

We have an annual inspection carried out by South West Fire Protection. They have advised on the number, type and location of fire extinguishers and fire blanket in the Hall and the Church, and ensure these are regularly monitored and are replaced where necessary.

We have a Fire Risk Assessment, which is available to all.

If you are a hall hirer, please ensure you have carried out your own Risk Assessments and that your group(s) know what to do.

As a Hall or Church user, it is well worth your while familiarising yourself with the types of fire extinguishers we have, their uses and their locations

Evacuation Procedure

We will make sure escape routes are well signed and kept clear at all times. The evacuation procedure instructions are on the wall in the vestibule outside the kitchen.

In case of fire, shout a warning to everyone in your vicinity and evacuate as necessary. Ensure people follow the evacuation signage to the car park / lawn area outside.. If appropriate use the fire extinguisher near to hand. Please ensure you do NOT use the water extinguisher on an electrical fire. If you feel it is required, delegate a person to call the fire brigade.

Evacuation plans are tested from time to time and updated if necessary. Hall users will need to have their own evacuation plans according to the need of their group.

First Aid

Our first aid box is located in the kitchen, in the wall cupboard to the right of the sink, marked 'First Aid'.

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including – as a minimum – a suitably stocked first aid box and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information for employees and volunteers.

Our person appointed to assist us is: _____

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is: _____

Consultation-

We will consult church and hall users on Health and Safety matters if they arise, and formally, when we review Health and Safety policy and practice.

Where necessary, we will appoint someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations. Where an appointment is made, we will record the details here.

Information and Training

We will provide any necessary information and training for our employees and volunteers in a timely manner. We will keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors and self-employed people who may need this to complete their work safely.

Signed: R. Wainwright Date: 15.04.2026

Print name : Richard Wainwright

Review Date: 15.04.2027

Hirers of the Hall or Church will have access to this policy, but in every case are required to carry out their own risk assessments specific to their particular activities. If relevant, those done for the Church may be used and adapted. A copy of this document will be kept in the church and made available to others on request.

Signed*: _____ Date: - / - / - - - -

*on behalf of Primley Church as agreed at a meeting on: