Church: Fire Risk Assessment

Churches are required to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In Scotland fire safety duties are contained in part 3 of The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended and The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Ecclesiastical have developed this fire risk assessment based on our own expertise. This assessment can only be used by churches whose normal activities are limited to what might be expected in a church building such as services and occasional public events such as concerts.

Churches with a wider range of activities such as night shelters, lettings and nurseries should consider appointing an independent consultant to help them carry out the Fire Risk Assessment.

How to use this Fire RiskAssessment

The assessment has the following sections which you will need to read and then complete:

Part 1 – Information about Our Church

Part 1 of the assessment is about collecting together all the information you need about your church so that you can perform the Fire Risk Assessment. It is broken down into various sections which are summarized below.

- A Our Church Details

 Basic information about our church location and the person responsible for the Fire Risk Assessment.
- **B** Parochial Church Council Declaration
 - A declaration about the awareness and understanding of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) or other church management committee of the requirements of the Order to be signed by the appropriate person.
- C General Information about our Church
 - Description of the church building and how it is used.
- D Potential Fire Hazards at our Church
 - Details of fire hazards, sources of ignition and their elimination or control.
- E Our Fire Protection Arrangements
 - Details of the current arrangements we have in place for fire protection.
- F Our Fire Detection, Warning and Extinguisher Equipment
 - Details of the equipment we have in place and its testing and maintenance.
- G Our Fire Safety Management
 - Information about our plans should a fire occur.

Part 2 - Our Fire Risk Assessment

Part 2 of the assessment is about the fire risks at our church and how we will go about fulfilling our obligations under the order.

Part 3 – Our Arrangements for Fire Safety at Our Church

Part 3 of the assessment details the measures we have taken to offset the risk of fire at our church.

Part 4 – Our Action Plan to Reduce Fire Risk at Our Church

Part 4 details any gaps in our fire protection arrangements and outlines what we are going to do to address them

Part 1 – Information about Our Church

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address:					
Trockbourne reduct Emotional France For Cole (but in the duri					
Westbourne Road, Emsworth, Hants FOTO ook (but in the administrative county of West Sussex)					
han and hu	The Parochial Church Council of:				
Prepared by:					
Churchwardens and Stewart Taylor	St John the Baptist, Westbourne				
n the diocese of:	Date:				
Chichester	26/10/22				
Suggested review date:					
October 2023					
hange in the method of heating or use of the buildi	ally unless there is a change that materially affects the fire risk such a ing, when it should be reviewed immediately.)				

B Parochial Church Council Declaration

As a church, we understand that we are required to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (in Scotland fire safety duties are contained in part 3 of The Fire Scotland Act 2005, as amended and The Fire Safety Scotland Regulations 2006) even if we have no employees.

We note that we are required to take such general fire precautions as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of employees, if we have any, and to take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances to ensure that the premises are safe for all other visitors to the church including volunteers, members of the congregation, and contractors. Our Fire Risk Assessment and arrangements are therefore directed, to the safety of people rather than the protection of the building itself.

We understand that we must appoint a responsible person and other competent persons to give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the size of our undertaking and the nature of our activities, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures. In the case of a church, we understand that the responsible person is the person who has control of the premises and we deem this to be the 'Body Corporate' namely the Parochial Church Council. We have also appointed the Parochial Church Council as the Competent Persons under the legislation.

Although the legislation only requires the responsible person to record the arrangements if five or more persons are employed, we have decided to do so anyway in order to demonstrate our commitment to ensuring the safety of everyone who uses our church and to ensure that everyone is aware of our fire safety arrangements.

We understand that the legislation is not prescriptive and that we are only required to undertake preventive measures where necessary'.

In carrying out our Fire Risk Assessment we have followed the Government guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (for Scotland - Scottish Government's Police and Community Safety Directorate, HM Fire Service Inspectorate for Scotland, the Scottish Building Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive) and have noted from this document that the action we take should be common sense and in the main, not expensive. We have also noted Appendix C of the guidance for Fire safety risk assessment: small and medium places of assembly which refers to listed and historic buildings and note that we will need to endeavour to strike a balance between ensuring sufficient fire safety measures are in place for the safety of people, yet avoid extensive alterations and helping to maintain the character of the building.

PCC member(s) responsible should sign here:

A. TURNER

Print name(s):

Andrew Turner

Role(s):

Churchwarden

Angela Leggett

A. LEGGETT

Churchwarden

You can see the full documentation referred to above at the links below:

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005: www.legislation.gov.uk/ uksi/ 2005/ 1541 /contents/made

Government Guidance including a fire risk assessment form is available from:

www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firesafety/firesafetylaw/aboutguides/and for Scotland www.firesafetyfirst co.uk/freedownloadspublications .html

A document that may also be of assistance is the Fire Safety Risk Assessment Small and Medium Places of Assembly: www.gov.uk/ government/publicationsf/ire-safety-risk- assessment-small-and-medium-places-of-assembly

For Scotlanda document that may be of assistance is Practical Fire Safety Guidancefor Places of Entertainment and Assembly: www.firesafetyfirst.eo.uk/ freedownloadspublications.html

C General Information about our Church

THE BUILDING:

Number of floors: Floor area (approximate overall size in square metres):

1, with ringing chamber and belfry above in tower

400

(You will need to measure the building to calculate things like the number of fire extinguishers required and travel distances. See also Plan page 18.)

Building description:

Grade 1 listed church with medieval origins modified in Victorian times and updated in early 2000s.

Choir vestry

Clergy vestry (includes organ basses)

Organ in South Aisle

Chancel

Nave

WC

Rear storage area

Boiler room (external access only)

Tower - internal stone staircase leading on first exit to ringing room, second exit to bell chamber, third exit to external tower castellations

(Describe what the building comprises noting if there is one main undivided area and then separate parts which can be closed off from the main area which could prevent the spread of a fire, e.g. The main undivided area of the church comprises a lofty nave and chancel with north and south aisles and organ chamber. There are north and south porches and a vestry all of which can be closed off from the main part of the church by substantial oak doors. There is a tower at the west end of the church which is completely separated from the rest of the church and can only be accessed from an external door.)

Basic construction details:

Stone and flint with wooden beaming. Stone floor throughout except for ringing room and bell chamber, where floors are of wood.

(For example, The church is built of stone/brick with a slate/tile roof on a timber frame. The floor is of solid construction covered with tiles.)

Use of the church:

For worship (at least daily)
Occasional concerts and lectures (average 12/year)
Music rehearsals, organ and choir, at least weekly.
Church open to visitors daily, 10:00 - 15:00

Note the use of the building and how often it is occupied, e.g. The church is used for services twice on a Sunday but otherwise the use is very limited. There is the occasional concert.

You should draw a plan of the church which can be used during the risk assessment process and then as a part of your fire safety arrangements documentation. This should be roughly to scale and should identify by name the main parts of the church and note all doors both internal, which separate different parts of the church, and external, which provide means of escape.

The plan can be used to note the location of fire extinguishers and other relevant information.

You can use a tape measure or rule to measure the building but an easy way is to pace along the outside walls and note down the distances. A good pace is about 1 metre.

There is a blank page at the back of this document for you to draw a plan of your church.

PEOPLE AT RISK:	
Occupants:	
Approximate average number attending a normal service:	
60	
Approximate maximum number attending special services and events such as weddings and at Christmas:	
250	
Approximate number of employees and/or volunteers in the church at any one time:	
6	
OCCUPANTS AT SPECIAL RISK FROM FIRE:	
Give details of any persons with disabilities who attend the church who would need help in evacuating the b	uildi
Wheelchair users, frail elderly, hearing impaired, visually impaired, learning disability. Sidespersons ensure that wheelchairs and children's buggies are not left in the central aisle East of the font.	
Give details of any children who attend the church and whether they occupy a different part of the building during services such as a Sunday School in the vestry:	
Choir members under the age of 16 (junior choir)	
Children attending with their parents Junior Choir members exit the Chancel in the 09:30 service at the start of the sermon to attend music theory tuition in the Choir Vestry. At least two adult are always in attendance.	s
Organists practise alone at various times (always with mobile phone).	
Give details of the number of persons who occupy remote parts of the building and when:	
Bellringers (> 6) on Monday evening, Sunday mornings and at other times for special services. Choir robes in choir vestry before and after services.	
(For example, do bell ringers practice when there is no-one else in the church. Does the organist practice alone or	
does someone undertake maintenance in an enclosed boiler room?)	
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	
Previous fire losses:	
Detail any fires or related incidents that anyone can remember even if it did not result in an insurance claim:	
None	
Other relevant information:	
Note any other information which could have a bearing on the risk of fire such as the nature of any nearby or	
adjoining premises or evidence of arson:	
None considered relevant.	

D Potential Fire Hazards at ourChurch

Where the answer is NO then some action may be required in order to ensure that your fire safety arrangements are satisfactory. This needs to be noted in the Action Plan at the end of the assessment. If the situation does not apply, enter N/A.

Electrical				
Is the fixed electrical system inspected and tested by a competent person at least every five years?		Yes 🗸	No	
If YES, state the name of the competent person and the date of the last inspection	n			
R&M Bailey 31/8/2018. Next inspection due 2023.				
Are all portable electrical appliances including those belonging to outside bodies annually tested? (PATtesting)		Yes 🗸	No	
If YES, state the name of the tester and the date of the last test				
PJG Electrical 24/10/22				
Are any electrical items that fail the testing removed immediately from the church	ch?	Yes 🗸	No	
Is the use of trailing leads and multi-point adaptors restricted as far as possible and subject to control?		Yes 🗸	No	
,				
If portable electric heaters including electric fan heaters, and radiant 'bar type fires are used are they included in the PAT				
testing programme and are they kept away from combustible materials?	Yes 🗸	No	N/A	
(Remember to check areas that you would not normally visit such as the ringing	chamber (or clergy vest	ry.)	
If portable LPG (liquid petroleum gas) heaters are used are they fixed away from combustible materials and are the arrangements				
for the storage and replacement of spare cylinders satisfactory?			N/A 🗸	
If heating appliances burning coal or other solid fuel, e.g. wood pellets,	Yes/No	N/A 🗸		
are used, are arrangements in place to ensure fire cannot spread accidentally? Are gas boilers subject to an annual maintenance contract with an				
approved Gas Safe registered contractor?	Yes 🗸	•	N/A	
If YES, state the name of the contractor and the date of the last inspection				
AndyGas Southern Ltd. New boilers installed April 2022.				
		0		
Are oil-fired boilers subject to an annual maintenance contract with an approval If YES, state the name of the contractor and the date of the last inspection	/ea OF IE	contracto	Γ <i>?</i>	
N/A				
Are oil tanks suitably bunded or double skinned and fitted with				
Are oil tanks suitably bunded or double skinned and fitted with a safety cut-off valve?			N/A 🗸	

Do you ensure that all heating appliances are kept clear of combustible materials?	Yes No No
Arson	
Have you considered the risk of arson and malicious attacks?	Yes No No
Is the storage of combustible materials and flammables such as petrol for mowers kept to a minimum and in a secure place where the risk to people is minimised?	Yes No No
Have you removed or kept secure anything which could be used by an arsonist such as matches and candles?	Yes No No
Cooking	
If you have a kitchen or servery in the church are measures in place to prevent fire as a result of cooking? Yes	No N/A
If kitchen equipment includes filters or ductwork are they cleaned regularly?	No N/A
N/A	
Are suitable fire extinguishers and a fire blanket located in the cooking area? Lightning If the church has a lightning conductor is it inspected by a competent, specialist Lightning Engineer at recommended intervals?	Yes No N/A
If YES, state the name of the contractor and the date of the last inspection MDS Consulting 25 March 2022	
Combustible Materials	
Has combustible material been removed from the church as far as possible?	Yes No No
(Examples of combustible material which can accumulate are hay and straw used in Christmas cribs, articles collected for jumble sales but never sold, waste paper collected for recycling and old Christmas trees.)	
Are all exits and escape routes kept clear of combustible materials?	Yes 🗸 No
Contractors and Building Works	
Are outside contractors subject to control when working in the church and are they required to use a 'hot work' permit system when necessary?	Yes No No
If volunteers undertake maintenance work in the church are suitable precautions taken such as the use of a 'hot work' permit system and the provision of suitable fire extinguishers close to the location of the work?	No N/A
Are both contractors and volunteers aware of safety arrangements including provision of fire extinguishers and escape routes during building works?	Yes No No

Our Fire Protection Arrangements

Means of Escape

Are there a suitable number of exits from the building?







This is addressed under the arrangements for Fire Safety Management.

(As a guide, it should be possible to evacuate the building in less than 2.5 minutes although this time may be extended for low-risk buildings such as churches. Guidance also indicates that one exit is sufficient for up to 60 persons but if the building can accommodate more than 60 persons there should be more than one exit. It will not normally be possible to increase the number or width of doors in a church, but remember that doors not normally in use such as external doors to vestries may be used.)

Do the exit doors open in the direction of escape?







This is addressed under the arrangements for Fire Safety Management.

(It is likely that all of the doors in the church are inward opening and impossible to change as they are an integral part of the historic fabric.)

Can exit doors be opened easily?





This is addressed under the arrangements for Fire Safety Management.

Is the travel distance acceptable where there is only a single escape route?



Is the travel distance acceptable where there are alternative means of escape?

(The travel distance is the furthest a person would have to travel from a point within the churchin order to reach an exit door. For areas with seating in rows, such as is found in the majority of churches, guidance suggests the following travel distances:

Where there is only a single escape route, the maximum distance is 15 metres for a normal fire risk area and 18 metres for a lower fire risk area;

Where there is more than one escape route, the maximum distance is 32 metres for a normal fire risk area and 45 metres for a lower fire risk area.

In the case of vestries that have their own external door, travel distances will normally fall within these guidelines.

The main body of the church may be regarded as a lower fire risk area and in most cases the travel distances should be within the guidelines.

However, you do need to measure travel distances in order to answer this question. Where they exceed the guidelines it will need to be addressed under the arrangements for Fire Safety Management.)

Are escape routes suitably protected from fire and kept clear of obstructions at all times?





(In practice, unlike many other buildings, traditional churches have very few corridors so the 'escape route is effectively the whole of the building. The porch is the most likely area to pose a risk of obstruction during an evacuation and must be kept clear of obstructions and combustibles such as free-standing noticeboards and displays.)

Are the means of escape suitable for persons with disabilities?







(Compliance with Equality legislation probably means that access to the church and therefore also egress is suitable for wheelchair users. If not, it will need to be addressed under the arrangements for Fire Safety Management.)

Is an Emergency Escape Lighting System installed?







If NO, detail your means of providing light in the event of a main lighting failure, e.g. hand lamps, torches etc

If YES, is it subject to regular testing?	Yes No N/A
If YES, state the intervals of testing and the date of the last full annual maintenance	re inspection
Are fire exit signs displayed?	Yes No V
If NO, describe here the arrangements in place to direct people to exits	
Sidespersons are present throughout public services.to direct and assist in the case of fire. The three manufactures are present throughout public services.	ain exits are large double doors and are kept
This is addressed under the arrangements for Fire Safety Management.	
Are Fire Safety Signs and Notices displayed?	Yes No V
(Signs need to be displayed indicating the location of fire extinguishers and the type	pes of fire for which they are suitable.
Fire Action Notices need to be displayed indicating what to do in the event of a	fire.)

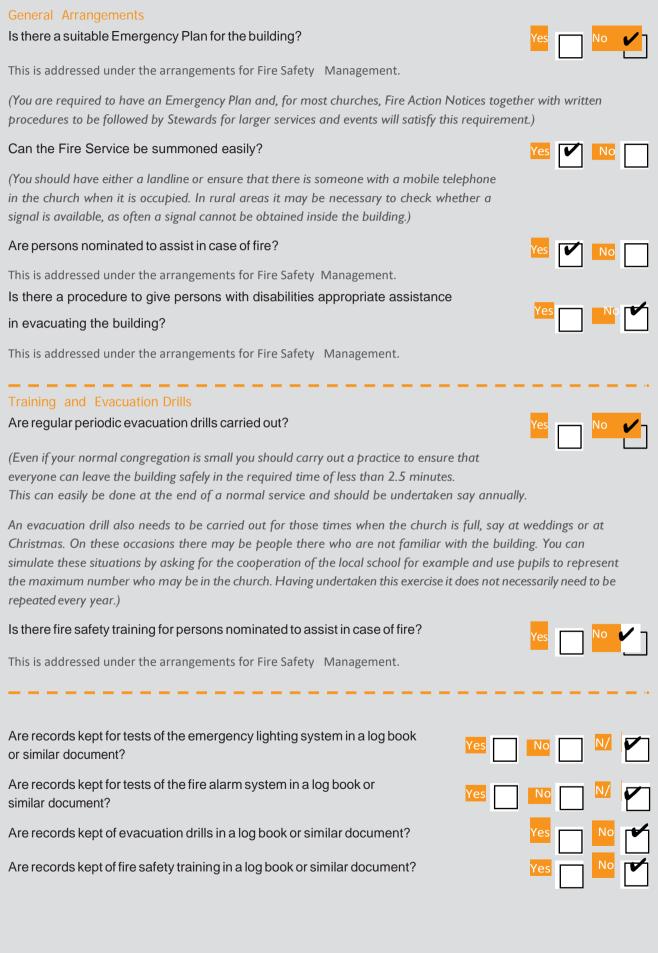
F Our Fire Detection, Warning and Extinguisher Equipment Is there a manually operated fire alarm such as a rotary gong or bell which is operated in the event of a fire? If YES, is it tested on a regular basis? How often is it tested? Is there an electric, manually operated fire alarm with 'break glass' panels to operate the alarm? If YES, is it tested on a regular basis? If YES, is it subject to a maintenance contract? If YES, state the name of the contractor and the date of the last maintenance visit Is there an automatic fire detection system and alarm which incorporates smoke detectors to activate the alarm in the event of a fire? If YES, is it tested on a regular basis? If YES, is it subject to a maintenance contract? If YES, state the name of the contractor and the date of the last maintenance visit If none of the above are provided, then describe here the arrangements for giving warning of a fire Verbal warning from sidespersons. The nature of the building is such that any conflagration in the public area would be evident to all present. Are suitable and sufficient portable fire extinguishers in place? If YES, are they subject to an annual maintenance contract? If YES, state the name of the contractor and the date of the last inspection visit Uni-Guard Fire Protection Ltd, last inspected 16.08.22 (Guidance indicates that there should be one 9-litre water extinguisher for around each 200 square metres of floor space with a minimum of two per floor. Note - a 6-litre hydro-spray or AFFF (Aqueous Film-Forming-Foam) extinguisher will have the same fire extinguishing capacity as 9 litres of water and is only two-thirds the weight making it them much easier to lift and use.

In addition, 2 Kg Carbon Dioxide extinguishers should be provided to deal with fires involving electrical equipment. One certainly needs to be provided near the organ and one near the main electrical intake.

If there is a kitchen or servery, a 6-litre Wet Chemical or AFFF extinguisher should be provided together with a fire blanket to smother any clothing which may catch fire.

Note that Dry Powder extinguishers are not suitable for use in historic buildings as they can cause irreparable damage to the building and contents.)

G Our Fire Safety Management General Arrangements Is there a suitable Emergency Plan



Part 2 – Our Fire Risk Assessment

Once you have gathered all the information in Part 1 you can then complete the actual Fire Risk Assessment below.

Our Fire Risk Assessment

Having completed our fact finding we now feel confident that we are fully aware of the fire hazards present in our church and the risks to people using the building. We have noted the precautions that we already have in place and where we have noted any deficiencies these will be rectified as soon as practicable. These matters are set out in Part 4 Our Action Plan. Part 3 Our Arrangements for Fire Safety on our Church sets out how we will deal with fulfilling our obligations.

Our assessment of the fire risk has been based on the following factors (see Appendix 1 for some example descriptions):

Occupation – How your building is used by people.

Weekdays - the building is used occasionally for Morning Prayer. Average attendance <10 and on Wednesdays for a 10.30 Communion Service with similar numbers. Cleaning and flower arranging takes place throughout the week; there are rotas. Sundays - service at 8am approx number attending 20, 9.30 service approx number 60, evening services on three evening per month approx number 20. Occasional offices - Baptisms, weddings and funerals. By their nature these will attract attendees who are not familiar with the Church. The Church will always have on duty a sufficient number (depending on the size of the event) of persons who are regular church goers and who will assist in marshaling duties as well as welcome. There are occasional lectures and concerts. These will be attended as required by congregation members familiar as above. The Church may be used by individuals for personal prayer. The Church is usually open to visitors during daylight hours.

People working on their own (e.g.organists, flower arrangers, cleaners, sacristan) will always carry a mobile phone so that they can summon help if necessary.

Fire Detection – Information about any fire detection systems you have in place.

No fire detection system is in place. In view of the nature of the building we are confident that when the building is occupied a fire would be detected almost immediately by persons either smelling or seeing smoke and raising the alarm by announcing 'Fire' and directing people to the exit doors..

Escape – In the event of an emergency, how people will exit your church.

From the main parts of the Church via one of the three main doors - north, south and west. which are clearly visible. All of these are wide and fully disabled accessible. Boiler room is entirely sealed from all other parts of the Church, is entered and exited by its own door. Choir vestry is exited from the exterior door. Clergy vestry forms part of the Chancel. Due to the lofty nature of the main body of the church there is a large open area where smoke can be contained, thus increasing the potential time to allow for evacuation.

Ringing room can be exited only via the internal stone stairs. In the event of an incident preventing exit down the stairs then exit upwards out onto the Tower exterior parts would be possible. From there ladder rescue by the Fire Service would be the only viable option. No one uses the ringing room unless with their own mobile or with another person who has a mobile. There is a signal present. Bell chamber is only rarely accessed and then either by skilled workmen with training or by volunteers fully familiar with the access and egress arrangements.

The designated assembly point is the War Memorial.

Fire Load — How easily the structure of your building could ignite and flames could spread in a fire.	
The fire load in the main body of the church is low. Whilst candles are used in the body of the church they are clearly visible, kept away materials and there is little risk of a fire starting or developing undetected. There are virtually no combustible linings that would aid the risk of a fire starting or developing undetected. There are virtually no combustible linings that would aid the risk of a fire starting or developing undetected.	
Likelihood – In your experience what is the possibility of a fire at your church taking into account the his of the building and existing precautions.	story
There is no recorded incidence of fire in the church for at least a century. The pattern of use of the building is substantially unchanged d	dillig tills period.
verall Fire Risk Assessment	
retain the Risk Assessment	
Based on the factors set out in the Fire Risk Assessment above, the overall Fire Risk Assessment is as 1. Potentialconsequences of fire: Please tick one:	s follows:
Slight harm: Outbreak of fire is unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant.	
Moderate harm: Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury (including serious injury) of one or more occupants, but is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.	

Extreme harm: Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.

Low: Unusually low likelihood of fire as a result of negligible potential sources of ignition.

Medium: Normal fire hazards (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).

High: Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result

2. Likelihood of fire: Please tick one:

in significant increase in the likelihood of fire.

Table

Tolerable

Based on the answers above you can now map the amount of risk in the table below.

Potential consequences of fire	Slight harm	Slight harm Moderate harm	
Likelihood of fire			
Low	Trivial risk	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk
Medium	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk	Substantial risk
High	Moderate risk	Substantial risk	Intolerable risk

The overall assessment of the fire risk at our church and the risk to persons, based on the table above and the answers in 1 and 2, is:

Part 3 – Our Arrangements for Fire Safety in our Church

This section details the arrangements for fire safety in our church. For some examples of content for this section please see Appendix 2.

	ghting		
Rechargeable torc	es kept at back of Church by sound system and in Clergy	vestry	
Manual Fire	larm		
None			
Automatic Fire	e Detection System		
None			

Exit Doors
North, south and west doors (all internal opening). Exterior door to Choir Vestry (internal opening), internal door to this vestry from chancel (internal opening)
Major Services and Events
Christmas and Easter - ensuring sufficient trained marshals for each service. Concerts - ad hoc but ensuring as above. Lectures - the same
Stewards and Training
There are approximately 20 'sidesmen' (both sexes). There is a written sidespersons procedure (PR12) which includes the requirement to unlock the South and West doors.
Record Keeping
Up-to-date copies of the following documents are maintained on the Box electronic document control system: Fire extinguisher inspection and maintenance visits. Boiler maintenance visits Fiixed electrical system inspections and tests. Portable appliance testing (PAT) Lightning conductor system inspections and tests.
Bell Ringers (where applicable) Due to the various differing risk factors applicable to Tower areas, this section should be completed following discussions with the Tower Captain. The agreed controls should be inserted in this section.
This document has been discussed with the Tower Captain.

Part 4 – Our Action Plan to Reduce Fire Risk at Our Church

	of our fact-finding exerc	se in order to maintain our risk as low and t	0
meet our Fire Safety Management Plan.			
Dur church guidance notes can be found at	www.ecclesiastical.co	m/churchmatters	
Action to be taken	Target completion date	Personresponsible	
Matches to be stored out of sight	Complete		

REVISION HISTORY

REVISION	DATE	DETAILS	BY	AUTHORISED
Rev 1	26.01.21			
Rev 2	22/11/22	Updated	AL, ST, AD, MK	

