

Section 3

Health & Safety

Guidance Notes for

Churches



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Introduction

Ecclesiastical Insurance was established over a century ago by Churchmen and laity, to provide reliable insurance for the Church. Owned by Allchurches Trust Limited, a registered charity, we are able to distribute all available profits to the Church and community, thus benefiting our highly valued customers.

Our commitment to providing the highest standard of service means that individuals and organisations choose Ecclesiastical Insurance every time. For insurance you can believe in, choose Ecclesiastical.

Our Guidance Notes

These guidance notes are based on current legislation and we have tried to make them thorough and informative. Please use them as a guide to maintaining a 'safer' church and as a reference guide to address specific issues you may have. If you require any further assistance, please contact the relevant organisations mentioned in the notes, Ecclesiastical Insurance, or your local Insurance Consultant and Surveyor.

Useful Contacts at Ecclesiastical Insurance

Ecclesiastical Insurance	Call: 01452 528533 or email: information@eigmail.com
Churches	Call: 0845 7773322 or email: churches@eigmail.com
Claims	Call: 01452 528533 or email: claims@eigmail.com
	Opening hours 9am to 5pm

If you want to find out who your local Insurance Consultant and Surveyor is, why not have a look on our website - www.ecclesiastical.co.uk/church

Note: Ecclesiastical Insurance provides these guidance notes FREE of charge to Ecclesiastical Church Insurance policyholders.

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Tower Tours

We would not usually expect parishes to admit ordinary members of the public to church towers or other high levels etc. However, should tower tours be undertaken the undernoted points should be borne in mind by parishes before embarking upon such activities. Although these notes provide general guidance for parishes, a visit by an Ecclesiastical Insurance Consultant and Surveyor will be necessary in most cases.

GENERAL

1. The maximum number on a tower tour at any one time should not exceed 15, including the stewards.
 2. No children under the age of 8 years should be allowed on such a tour and all children under the age of 16 years should be accompanied by an adult.
 3. All large items of baggage etc, should be left at ground level and each visitor should have "both hands free".
 4. A minimum of two stewards should escort parties, (with one at the front and one at the rear), throughout the tour and should be provided with a means of communication with the ground (both internally and externally) in order to summon help in the event of any emergency. Stewards should be able bodied and aged between 18 and 65 years.
 5. A new tour should not commence until all visitors on the previous tour have descended to the ground and have been accounted for.
 6. Notices should be displayed highlighting the difficulty of the climb (if appropriate), possibly by the use of photographs. It should also highlight whether or not the climb is suitable for those who are elderly, infirm, disabled, pregnant, suffer from heart or respiratory disorders or from any other medical condition which could be affected by the climb.

The notice should make it clear that suitable clothing and footwear should be worn.

Stewards should draw the attention of visitors to the notice, before the ascent is undertaken.
 7. Smoking should be prohibited.
 8. Hand rails should be provided on staircases, or in any areas where there is a danger, however slight, of visitors falling or losing their footing.
 9. Adequate lighting of the bulk head variety should be provided along the entire route.
 10. Access points to other high level areas eg. roofs, roof spaces etc. along the route should be secured by locked doors. Access to any areas containing dangerous machinery should be secured in a similar manner.
- Access to bell and ringing chambers¹ may be permitted but only if the bells are left in the 'down' position. It must be ensured that the clock mechanism is enclosed should the tour encompass this area.
- 1 - See "Guidance Note for the Conditions of use applying to change-ringing bells".
- Access to the tower roof should only be permitted during fine weather and not during heavy rain, sleet, snow, strong winds or temperatures of less than 0°C.
11. Access to the tower must be by safe means and ladders, hatches etc. should be avoided. Door ways should be sufficiently wide to admit one person at a time, with ease.

At the top of the tower it should be ensured that parapets have a minimum height of 1.1 metres (existing parapets may require improvement, with the addition of hand rails etc, to make up this height).

Access onto sloping tower roofs should not be permitted.

Where parapeting is pierced, any gaps should be no wider than 150 mm. Larger gaps may need to be fitted with additional bars to reduce their width.

Duckboards should be provided around parapet gutters to prevent damage to the roof surface. These should be well maintained and treated with fungicide, as necessary, to prevent the build up of algae.

Should a spire be present, then there should be a minimum width of walkway around the spire of at least 600 mm and with duckboards provided as above.
 12. Tours to other high level areas should be restricted to specialist groups such as architects, architectural students, and contractors.

If the tour should encompass crossings at high level such as clerestories, triforiums, roof spaces etc. then suitable walkways, with handrails to a height of not less than 1.1 metres, must be provided, together with toe-boards and intermediate rails.

Tower Tours

13. If areas with restricted headroom are visited, warning notices should be clearly displayed and foam rubber pads fixed to any low beams, ceiling edges, projections etc.
14. Should a charge be levied in connection with the tour, this may have implications as regards the security of cash and loss of money insurance. If in doubt, parishes should contact their insurers.

Most insurance policies will cover the legal liability of parishes for injury to members of the public incurred following accidents during tower tours.

However, you should contact your insurers to obtain confirmation that your policy does cover tower tours and to give the Company the opportunity to consider the insurance implications of the planned activity.

General Precautions

Often simple precautions and preventative measures involving little in the way of expenditure can substantially reduce the risk of damage to, or loss of property and injury to persons. As insurers, we gain a dramatic, if expensive, insight into some common causes of loss and it may be useful to Church Authorities for us to list some points of maintenance and management which may help to avoid an unnecessary loss of heritage or unfortunate injury to a church official, parishioner or visitor.

FOOTPATHS¹

Regular maintenance is required to ensure these remain free from moss, algae, leaves, holes, loose materials, tree roots and obstructions and are reasonably level. Ramps and steps need particular attention with hand rails and/or lighting provided if hazardous. Bear in mind the difficulty the frail, elderly and disabled may have in negotiating access to and from the church.

STEPS, STAIRS AND LADDERS

Bell tower steps, steps down to boiler rooms and access ladders should all be inspected at least annually and any defects remedied. Uneven and worn treads are a positive danger to the unwary and whilst the indentations created by footsteps over many centuries may give a sense of history, they do nothing for safety. External steps down to boiler rooms should not be neglected and these require frequent and careful attention to remove moss, algae, leaves and other debris. They should be protected at the top by railings and a lockable gate, be fitted with a handrail and if used during the hours of darkness be well lit.

BOUNDARY WALLS, FENCES AND LYCH GATE¹

Walk the boundary of your churchyard at least two or three times per year. Check for leaning pillars, posts, and sections of wall and ensure that the structure and roof covering of the lych gate are sound. Early attention to defects may prevent costly repairs later on.

GRAVESTONES AND TOMBS

Although the maintenance of gravestones and tombs is the responsibility of the deceased's family, the church may be responsible for any injury if the family cannot be traced.

It is, therefore, important that all gravestones and tombs are regularly inspected to ensure public safety. Please refer to the separate Guidance Note on Churchyard Safety.

TREES¹

Trees are a frequent cause of serious damage in a variety of ways. During windy conditions they may fall onto or lash against the building, and rocking of the roots can cause collapse of boundary walls. Leaves and twigs block gutters and underground drains. Roots removing moisture from clay soils can lead to shrinkage of the clay causing foundations to move and walls to crack. Branches falling onto visitors, neighbouring property or cars are a frequent source of claims.

Regular inspections of trees, at least every six months, should be considered essential and at least every five years by a tree surgeon.

DRAINAGE

Any water penetrating the walls of the church via the roof or from below ground is likely to cause extensive damage through rot to timbers, etc. Gutters, downpipes and roof valleys need routine clearance at least every six months. Special arrangements should be in place for clearance of snow and ice from valleys and the tower roof during wintry conditions. Ensure that water shed from the buildings drains away from the foundations.

General Precautions

ROOF COVERING AND STRUCTURE

Visual inspections of the external walls and roof coverings should be carried out at frequent intervals to discover any defects requiring attention at an early stage. Look out particularly for loose or defective pinnacles, parapets, roof crosses and slipped or missing slates. Inspections should be made after every period of stormy weather.

FLOORS AND FLOOR COVERINGS

Most accidents in churches arise from slips, trips and falls. It is most important that all floor surfaces are inspected regularly and any defective areas made safe immediately and repairs carried out as quickly as possible. Defective floors include unfixed, broken and loose tiles and paving stones. Rotten and loose floorboards and pew platforms are another hazard. Trips and falls are also caused by worn, frayed, loose or unfixed rugs, mats and carpets, and by trailing electric leads and cables. All unfixed floor coverings should be removed or fixed down.

FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS AND POLISHES

A number of major fires have been caused by vapours given off by polishes within a confined space igniting spontaneously or by a spark from electrical switches. In no circumstances should polish, polish rags or other flammable liquids be stored anywhere near electrical switches and preferably they should be kept in minimum quantities within a metal cabinet in a well ventilated area.

Paraffin or petrol for lawn mowers must not be stored within the church.

LOSS REDUCTION MEASURES

Despite all reasonable precautions, losses of varying magnitude may still occur. Sensible forward planning can, however, minimise such losses and some thought should be given to loss reduction measures. These could include:

1. Preparation of a list of local tradesmen – plumber, roofing contractor, general builder – who can be called upon to assist at short notice.
2. Provision of, or note of, where tarpaulins can be located to cover holes in the roof or to protect contents removed outside the church.
3. Produce a notice for hanging on the vestry wall to show the position of the water mains stop tap, electrical switches etc.
4. Locate and ensure that water supplies for fire extinguishment are accessible – including the nearest fire hydrant.
5. Adequately record details of the church valuables, portable furniture and stained glass. Ultra violet marking, engraving etc. plus a good description may help the Police recover stolen property.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The following organisations are able to provide advice to Church Authorities:

Ecclesiastical Insurance Group Tel: 0845 7773322

Fire Protection Association Tel: 0207 902 5300

Local Crime Reduction Officer

Local Fire Safety Officer

English Heritage Tel: 0207 973 3434

Council for the Care of Churches

Tel: 0207 898 1866

Local Diocesan Advisory Committee

¹See [Guidance Notes for Churchyard Safety](#)

Churchyard Safety

There is a range of hazards associated with churchyards. These notes are intended to provide guidance in order to reduce the likelihood of injury or damage to property.

TREES

Many churchyards contain a large number of trees. Although healthy trees may fall in extreme weather, diseased or dead trees are much more likely to fall causing damage to the church or neighbouring buildings and presenting a possibility of injury. The roots of trees can encroach upon the foundations of neighbouring buildings causing subsidence or blockage of drains.

All trees within the churchyards should be inspected annually by a competent person for signs of disease or too close proximity to the church or neighbouring buildings. A record should be kept of the inspection and any subsequent work. This record will ensure that the inspection is carried out and could prove useful in defending any legal claim against the Parish.

Any required lopping, pruning or felling should be carried out without delay. Where trees have previously been pollarded, this practice should be continued at appropriate intervals. Where trees are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order, the Local Authority should be consulted prior to any work being carried out.

Whilst it is accepted that experienced, competent members of the church can carry out minor work, major felling, pruning or working at height must only be carried out by a professional contractor. Only persons suitably qualified and equipped with the appropriate safety equipment should operate chain saws.

Any trees on neighbouring land which could be a hazard to the church should be visually inspected during the annual inspection and, if any give cause for concern, a letter should be written requesting the landowner to take appropriate remedial action. A copy of the letter should be retained.

CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

Equipment used to maintain churchyards is often more powerful than that used domestically. A number of injuries are caused each year which could be avoided by taking simple precautions.

All garden machinery should be inspected and serviced regularly and any defects remedied immediately. Appropriate safety equipment should be used which can range from substantial footwear when using mowing machinery to ear defenders, safety goggles or visors, gloves and footwear for using strimmers and hedge cutters. The manufacturers instructions should always be followed regarding use and the provision of safety equipment.

Hand tools should be inspected for defects such as damaged blades and loose handles and should be kept sharp and clean. Gloves reduce a persons ability to detect when a tool is slipping and should therefore not be worn when using wooden handled, sharp edged tools such as billhooks and slashers.

Particular care needs to be exercised when clearing rubbish from around the church. Broken glass and discarded hypodermic needles may be concealed in long grass. Heavy duty gloves and other protective clothing must be worn and children should not be involved in "litter picks".

All persons involved in churchyard maintenance should be trained in the use of tools and machinery. When work is being carried out at least two persons should be present. Any use of ladders should be carefully considered and ladders secured appropriately. Persons under 18 years of age should not use machinery.

GRASS CUTTING

A principal cause of accidents in churchyards is persons tripping over kerbs or graves which have become obscured by long grass. There is effectively no defence in such circumstances to a claim that the church authorities have failed in their duty under The Occupiers' Liability Act to ensure that visitors are reasonably safe for the purposes they were permitted to be in the churchyard.

If there is a risk of persons tripping over kerbs or graves then the grass must be kept to such a height that the kerb or grave is clearly visible. Regular grass cutting is therefore essential.

Churchyard Safety

GRAVESTONES AND TOMBS

Over a period of time monuments suffer the ravages of frost and water and may become unsafe. Serious injuries and even fatalities have occurred when apparently securely mounted stones have fallen over.

Maintenance of gravestones and tombs is the responsibility of the deceased's family. However, where the family no longer tends the grave or cannot be traced, responsibility for any injury may rest with the church.

All gravestones, tombs and vaults should be inspected at least annually. The inspection need not be carried out by experts. A churchwarden, churchyard officer (if appointed) or other PCC member may undertake the work. Each stone should be physically handled to check for loose mountings, disintegrating mortar or undue spalling caused by age or frost, thus rendering the stonework unsafe.

The prime function of the survey is public safety. Stones in a dangerous state should be carefully laid on the ground and, where appropriate, the family contacted to advise of the action taken, repair costs not being the responsibility of the church.

Any re-ordering of the churchyard or extensive work on individual tombs may necessitate a faculty.

A note of the survey should be recorded in the PCC minutes, stating the date and names of the personnel undertaking the survey, that all stones were inspected, together with a record of the number of stones actually laid or other action taken. Such action would be an important feature in the defence of any legal claim against the church.

VISITORS

Paths should be reasonably level and free from anything which may cause someone to trip or slip. Boundary walls and railings should be stable and in a good state of repair. Any temporary hazardous areas such as open graves or parts of buildings undergoing repair should be adequately roped off and suitable warning signs erected. Any permanent hazardous areas such as crypts or boiler houses should be locked or fenced as appropriate.

Remember that you owe a duty of care to trespassers and in particular to children who may see the churchyard as an exciting place to play.

The Use of Ladders

Every year, many people are injured, some fatally, while using ladders. A fall from as little as two metres can be fatal. More than half the accidents occur because ladders are not securely placed and fixed. A ladder is a means of access, not a safe working platform. Ladders should only be used for minor jobs of short duration which only require the use of one hand so that the other hand can be used to hold onto the ladder.

ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF ACCESS

See whether an alternative means of access is more appropriate. If possible use a mobile scaffold tower or a mobile elevated working platform (cherry picker). Consider using contractors who have the proper equipment rather than trying to do the work yourself.

LADDER STANDARDS

Only ladders which meet the appropriate British or European standards should be used. BS 1129: 1990 applies to wooden ladders, BS 2037: 1994 applies to metal ladders and BSEN/131 applies to both.

The maximum permitted load must not be exceeded.

Class 1 (Industrial) ladder – the maximum static vertical load is 175kg.

Class 3 (Domestic) ladder – the maximum static vertical load is 125kg.

CHOICE OF LADDER

Ensure the ladder is suitable for the job it is required for, is of the correct construction material and the appropriate length. Ladders should not be painted as this can hide defects.

For electrical work only use ladders of a non-conductive material.

Allow one metre of ladder length above the highest rung you use. Never stand on the top four rungs.

We would suggest that ladders are not used for work in excess of five metres.

STEP LADDERS

Step ladders are suitable for small jobs of short duration where it is not possible to rest a ladder against a wall or other support. They should only be used for minor maintenance at a height not exceeding two metres. The step ladder should have an "A" frame with a small working platform at the top which can be used to hold tools and materials. The platform should never be used to stand on. There must be a mechanism to prevent the legs from spreading out and a safety catch to prevent the joint opening. They must be placed on firm level ground. The height of the steps should not exceed three times the width of the base.

ROUTINE CHECKS

Before use, the ladder should be checked to ensure that the general condition is sound and that it is clean and dry, free from wet paint, oil, mud or other slippery substances.

In addition checks should be made to ensure that there are:

- No cracks.
- No rungs missing, bent or loose.
- No stiles (outside uprights) damaged or bent.
- No warping or splitting of wooden ladders.
- No corrosion of metal ladders.
- No sharp edges (metal) or splinters (wood).
- Foot pads, caps and other rubber fittings in place and sound.

SAFE POSITIONING

The ladder should be placed on a firm, level, dry surface. Where this is not possible, for example working on grass, the feet should be tied to stakes in the ground to stop slipping and a large flat board placed underneath the feet to prevent them sinking into the earth.

The ladder should only be set against structures capable of supporting the load that will be imposed upon them.

Ensure the ladder cannot be knocked over by passing traffic. Exclusion zones may be necessary to ensure unauthorised people do not pass underneath the ladder.

The ladder should be set at an angle of 75°, that is one unit of measure out from the wall, or support for every four units of measure up.

SECURING THE LADDER

Both the bottom and upper part of the ladder should be secured by tying from the stiles to fixed objects. If ladders are frequently required to be used in the same position then permanent ladder ties should be located into any suitable nearby masonry or brickwork. If it is impossible to secure the ladder in this way then an able bodied adult should "foot" the ladder by standing

The Use of Ladders

with one foot on the bottom rung and holding the stiles in each hand.

Extension ladders should have an overlap of at least three rungs.

Consider the use of proprietary ladder stabilisers. Suitable devices are available from Ladder Safety Devices Ltd. Tel: 01825 872256.

SAFE USE

When using a ladder the following should be considered:

- Keep your body facing the ladder at all times centred between the stiles.
- Don't reach too far forwards or sideways or stand with one foot on the ladder and one on something else.
- Do not over-stretch. Climb down the ladder and move it however time-consuming this might be.
- Keep both hands free to hold the ladder as much as possible. If you need to carry tools use a shoulder bag, belt holster or belt hooks. Use a rung hook for hanging a paint pot.
- Hold onto the ladder with one hand when working.
- Wear strong flat shoes or boots with dry soles and a good grip.
- Do not wear sandals, slip-ons or have bare feet.
- Do not use a ladder in strong winds or if it is raining.
- Only use a ladder if you feel completely confident.

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

Ladders should carry an identification number and a maintenance log should be kept.

As well as an inspection every time prior to use, an inspection and maintenance schedule should be employed to ensure every ladder is thoroughly inspected on a regular basis, depending on the environment where it is used and stored and the frequency of use. If any defects are found, the ladder should be withdrawn from use, suitably labelled and segregated for repair or safe disposal.

Cords, chains and ropes should be checked and replaced if defective, and pulleys should be lubricated regularly. Missing or defective pads or sleeves should be replaced.

All ladders should be cleaned regularly before being stored. Climbing or gripping surfaces should be free of oil, grease, mud or other slippery substances.

Timber ladders may be coated with transparent non-conductive finish such as varnish, shellac or a clear preservative but not any opaque covering such as paint. Aluminium equipment should be given an adequate protective coating when it is subject to acids, alkalis or corrosive substances.

STORAGE

Storage areas should be easily accessible. Ladders should be stored in conditions similar to those in which they will be used, protected from direct exposure to the elements and well ventilated. Storage racks should give protection against damage, with sufficient support to prevent excessive sagging. Materials should not be stored on top of ladders. Ladders should be chained and locked to prevent unauthorised use.

Interpretation of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994

These Regulations commonly known as the CDM Regulations are intended to protect the health and safety of people working in construction and others who may be affected by their activities. This Guidance Note is intended to provide a brief synopsis.

BACKGROUND

The safety record of the construction industry is not good with 600 people having been killed in the period 1993 – 2000. This figure is made up of 429 employees, 139 self-employed persons and 32 members of the public. The object of the CDM Regulations is to establish a culture of loss prevention in the construction industry.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

1. Health & Safety is assessed throughout the complete building cycle.
Design – Construction – Operation – Maintenance – Demolition
2. There is the naming of an individual or firm who has overall responsibility for Health & Safety at any one time, known as the Planning Supervisor.
3. The client and design team are included in the Health & Safety remit for the project.

WHERE DOES IT APPLY?

To "construction work" eg. site preparation, new buildings, alterations, repairs, restoration, upkeep, temporary structures and even redecoration and conservation work which;

- last more than 30 days.
- involve more than 500 person days of work.
- involve 5 people or more on site at any one time.
- any demolition work.

THE KEY PLAYERS

1. **The Client**
Has a legal responsibility to act in a manner insofar as it is reasonably practicable to select and appoint a competent Planning Supervisor and Principal Contractor.

Must be satisfied that adequate resources are or have been allocated by the above persons in the design and construction stages to allow for safe and healthy working.

Must provide the Planning Supervisor with all information relevant to Health and Safety regarding the project.

2. **The Planning Supervisor** (this is a role within the CDM Regulations concerned with co-ordination of Health & Safety matters) is appointed by the client.

Must ensure that the Health & Safety Plan is developed/in place before work on site commences.

Must ensure that the Health & Safety file is being prepared.

Must advise the Client regarding the allocation of Health & Safety resources.

Any person can be appointed as Planning Supervisor but such a person should be competent and have a full understanding of design processes, building methods and practices, and sufficient knowledge of Health & Safety legislation practice. There are two bodies, the Institute of Planning Supervisors and the Association of Planning Supervisors and you may well find members of the above Associations acting as Planning Supervisors. Fees charged by the Planning Supervisor range from 1-2½% of the contract price.

Usually the Planning Supervisor will be a full-time employee of the Principle Contractor or Designer. Occasionally a suitably qualified and competent Client employee may be appointed to fulfil this role as part of their other duties.

There has been some debate amongst insurers whether or not Professional Indemnity insurance should be arranged for the Planning Supervisor.

Generally speaking, provided that the role of the Planning Supervisor is integral to the contract for the building operations and the person is not engaged in the capacity of a professional Planning Supervisor, the normal Employers and Public Liability insurance arrangements will respond to incidents of injury or damage and matters arising under Health & Safety at Work legislation covered by the policy.

If the individual is a professional person holding Professional Indemnity insurance as part of their normal function they should consider advising their insurers.

As with any substantial building works project the insurer of the property should of course be notified of the work to be undertaken.

Interpretation of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994

3. Designer

Must produce designs that avoid/reduce risks as far as reasonably practical.

Must ensure that the project can be constructed, used and maintained safely.

Must co-ordinate with the Planning Supervisor to provide the relevant information to complete the Health & Safety file (see below).

4. Principal Contractor

Must ensure compliance with the Health & Safety plan by themselves and all those working under them.

Must update the plan when and if necessary.

Must ensure the competence of his contractors.

Must co-ordinate all the contracts.

This results in an integrated approach to site safety.

5. Individual Contractor

Must ensure that they work safely, co-ordinate their activities and exchange information when sharing a site with others.

PAPERWORK

The regulations require the following two documents:

(a) Health & Safety File

This contains information regarding the Health & Safety issues of all aspects of the design and is in effect a manual for the completed project.

It is prepared by the planning supervisor.

It is given to the client when the project is completed.

(b) Health & Safety Plan

The plan relates to Health & Safety issues during construction and execution of the project.

It is developed by the principal contractor, in conjunction with the Planning Supervisor.

PUBLICATIONS

Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 – The Role of the client. Ref: CIS39

Having construction work done? Duties of clients under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994. Ref: MISC193

Both of these publications can be obtained free of charge from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2WA. Tel: 01787 881165.

Building Works

The following points should be considered by the PCC when setting out on a programme of works:

1. Plans/specifications should be drawn up of the works to be carried out in conjunction with the Architect. The specification should make reference to site/building security ie. ladders to be removed, boarding for scaffolding when necessary.
2. A faculty for the work should be applied for.
3. Details of the work should be sent to Ecclesiastical for confirmation of insurance for faculty application.
4. Questionnaires issued by Ecclesiastical Insurance need to be completed and returned so advice can be given regarding cover required under the terms of the contract. In some cases a higher policy excess may be necessary whilst the works are in operation.
5. A Hot Work permit will be sent with the questionnaires. Where hot work is being carried out during a contract, it is imperative that the procedures outlined in the permit be implemented and the permit completed. This document should be passed to the Architect.
6. If additional cover is required Ecclesiastical Insurance will advise of terms and premium involved and issue the appropriate cover note.
7. The works are normally carried out over a fixed period of time. If this period is likely to be exceeded then Ecclesiastical Insurance must be informed so extensions of cover can be arranged.
8. Depending on the nature and extent of work, consideration should be given to requesting a re-survey by Ecclesiastical Insurance once the works have been completed so that a revised scheme of insurance can be prepared, taking into account the alterations that have been made.
9. The PCC should ensure that they comply with the provisions of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994 – Ecclesiastical Insurance has produced a separate Guidance Note on this topic.
10. It is strongly recommended that only contractors who agree to follow the Lead Sheet Association standards and who are experienced in working with lead, be asked to undertake any work involving the repair or installation of lead.
Lead Sheet Association
Tel: 01892 822773

Lead Contractors Association
Tel: 01342 317885
11. Electrical supply installations, both temporary and permanent, should be installed in accordance with the "Regulations for Electrical Installations" issued by the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE), Current Edition, under British Standard BS7671.
12. All gas supplies should be installed by a Council of Registered Gas Installers (CORGI) registered gas fitter. Gas supplies to appliances should be by fixed piping or armoured flexible tubing. Gas cylinders should be located outside buildings, secured and protected from unauthorised interference.

If you have any doubts regarding works/alterations to be carried out, please contact Ecclesiastical Insurance who will be happy to give advice.

Conditions of Use Applying to Change-Ringing Bells

As a general rule, bells should always be left in the 'down' position other than for ringing. This is accepted good practice and provides new ringers with practice in 'ringing up' and 'ringing down'. It also reduces corrosion to the clapper bolt caused by moisture collecting in the bells. From a Health and Safety point of view it is extremely hazardous for bells to be left 'up' particularly if fire fighters or others need to enter the tower or if unauthorised persons including children interfere with the ropes. Where local circumstances require bells to be left in the 'up' position these notes are to provide guidance to Bellringers in implementing safe practices. The notes indicate a general safe case which should be interpreted to meet each unique local situation.

GENERAL

Bells should be left in the 'down' position when not in use during the working week between 7am Monday and 6pm Friday with Public Holidays excepted.

Outside this period, if bells are left in the 'up' position then the ropes must be hoisted towards the ceiling on a 'spider' and locked in position. Notices warning that the bells are 'up' and that the ropes must not be touched should be displayed in the Ringing Room. The access door to the Bell Chamber must be kept locked, a danger notice exhibited and a single key kept in the control of the Ringing Master or Deputy. If access is required to the Bell Chamber during the weekend, whilst the bells are 'up', then this must be under the control of the Ringing Master or Deputy.

ADULT RINGERS

The resident Ringing Master, or other person responsible for tower safety, must take reasonable steps to ensure that they are satisfied that all adult ringers (those aged 18 years and over) including visiting ringers are competent, in good health, and of suitable height and build. Competent means that ringers have sufficient experience in the opinion of the Ringing Master, or be in the process of being trained in bell-ringing. The Ringing Master must warn visiting ringers of the particular circumstances attached to the tower.

JUNIOR RINGERS

Junior ringers must be at least 8 years old. Written consent must be obtained from a parent or guardian for each child to ring or to be taught to ring. Children must be in good health, and of suitable height, build and temperament. Children must be suitably experienced or be in the process of being taught to ring. It should be at the discretion of the Ringing Master as to whether or not a child is suitable. At least one responsible adult other than the Ringing Master (eg. the parent of one of the children present, or an

experienced adult ringer) must be present when children are in the bell tower. A record should be maintained of each junior ringer's instruction and training and their level of competence.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS CONCERNING HEAVY RINGS OF BELLS

Rings of bells where the Tenor weighs 20 cwt or more may additionally be left in the 'up' position during the working week, providing that the following conditions are met.

The bell-frame must be secured against any person being able to come into contact with the bells without the authority of the Ringing Master. This may be done by caging in the bell-frame, fencing any walkway or securing any door adjacent to the bell-frame with materials sufficiently robust to prevent access.

A single controlled door in the cage or screen shall be provided with a single key which shall remain in the control of the Ringing Master or Deputy whilst the bells are up. Where no access route to another part of the building passes through the Bell Chamber, the access door to the Bell Chamber itself may be considered the controlled door.

TURNING THE CLAPPERS OF BELLS UP 'WRONG'

Where it is necessary to turn the clapper of a bell to the 'right' side after ringing bells 'up' then the following must be observed:

- a) The procedure for turning the clapper must be specified in detail and approved by Ecclesiastical Insurance. A copy shall be displayed prominently in the Ringing Room.
- b) Only the Ringing Master or other trained deputy shall be allowed to carry out the procedure.

Conditions of Use Applying to Change-Ringing Bells

DEFINITIONS

- a) **Ringing Master**
Otherwise Tower Captains or Conductor, being the person with delegated powers from the Incumbent, PCC or alternative authority, with responsibility for the ringing of the bells and safety within the tower.
- b) **Spider**
Rope and pulley system with hook upon which the ropes can be hung and drawn up towards the ceiling.
- c) **Ringing Room**
Room or area from which the bells are rung.
- d) **Bell-Chamber**
The area of the tower in which the bell-frame is located.
- e) **'Up' Position**
The bell mouth upwards and the bell at rest supported by the stay and slider mechanism in readiness for 'full circle' ringing.
- f) **'Down' position**
The bell mouth downwards and at rest.
- g) **'Wrong' position**
Having rung the bell 'up' the clapper is resting against the higher side of the bell mouth (the 'wrong' side) and before ringing can commence the clapper has to be moved over to the lower side.

Sale of Second-hand Goods

Each year many dangerous items (particularly electrical items) are 'generously donated' to jumble sales and charities with the end users often being the most vulnerable members of society. Whilst these items are given with the best of intentions the end result could be injury or possibly death. These guidance notes are designed to help you avoid accepting the most hazardous items and to ensure the safety of those who

SALE OR SUPPLY AS A MAIN BUSINESS

If you sell or supply second hand goods as the main or as a substantial part of your business you should follow the guidelines noted below.

- **Furniture and soft furnishings.**

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 govern the sale and supply of new and second hand furniture and furnishings. The law applies to retailers, second-hand shops and charity shops as well as auctioneers.

The regulations apply to upholstered domestic furniture, including settees, chairs, bed bases, mattresses, headboards, stools, dining chairs, sofa beds and garden furniture suitable for indoor use. Nursery items such as prams, pushchairs, playpens, cots and carrycots are also included. Cushions and pillows are controlled as well as loose covers for upholstered furniture.

Any furniture manufactured and sold since 1990 should comply with the regulations. Any upholstered furniture made before 1950 is totally exempt even if it has been re-upholstered.

You should be able to tell that furniture complies with the Regulations as a "permanent" label should be attached to the item. This is normally headed "CARELESSNESS CAUSES FIRE" and then states that the item complies with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. It also explains in detail that the various components comply with the relevant ignitability tests.

Beds and mattresses do not have to have the permanent label but usually have some indication that the Regulations have been met such as a blue "BS 7177:1991" label claiming compliance or showing the date of manufacture.

As a guide, furniture and furnishings manufactured between 1950 and 1990 should not be accepted for sale.

- **Electrical Appliances**

Heating appliances and electric blankets should not be accepted. There is a substantial risk of these items being faulty and possibly serious injuries or death resulting.

Other electrical items may be accepted for sale provided that you have them inspected and tested by a competent person such as a suitably qualified and experienced electrician (preferably a member of the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC) or the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA)) before the goods leave your control. A register should be kept of all items inspected including date inspected, description and any serial numbers and the item should be tagged to show that it has been inspected.

- **Gas Appliances**

These items may be accepted for sale provided that you have them inspected and tested by a competent person such as a gas installer registered with the Council for Registered Gas Installers (CORGI), and a record is kept of all items inspected including date inspected, description and any serial numbers and the item should be tagged to show that it has been inspected.

- **Toys**

Toys, including second-hand toys, must comply with the Toys (Safety) Regulations 1995. It is now an offence to supply a toy that does not carry a CE conformity marking. Details must be included of the name, trade name or trademark and address of the manufacturers if they are established in the Community, or the importer if appropriate. The use of the CE marking is confirmation that all the provisions of the Regulations have been complied with.

Electrically operated toys (other than battery toys) must be inspected prior to sale by a suitably qualified and experienced person in the same way as for other electrical items and details recorded as noted above. Any other toy must be inspected prior to sale by a suitably trained and experienced person to ensure it complies with all the relevant regulations. Guidance can be obtained from your local Trading Standards Officer.

- **Children's Clothing**

In order to prevent injury and possible strangulation in children, the Children's Clothing (Hood Cords) Regulations 1976 prohibit the sale or possession of a child's outer garment with a hood,

Sale of Second-hand Goods

where a hood cord is fitted. This includes second-hand clothing. The regulations apply to raincoats, overcoats, anoraks or other garments suitable for outerwear. This includes tracksuit tops.

To see if the regulations apply, fasten the garment and lay it out as flat as possible. If the chest measures less than 44 cm (approx. 17.5 inches) then the garment must not be fitted with a hood cord.

All clothing should be checked to see that it is clean and safe for someone else to wear.

OCCASIONAL SALES OF GOODS AT FETES AND JUMBLE SALES

You should try and follow the guidelines given above as far as possible but we accept that it is not practical to arrange a professional inspection of electrical and gas equipment. The best thing is to refuse donations of electrical and heating appliances.

For toys and other items use common sense. A responsible person should be appointed to check through the items prior to sale to eliminate any which seem dangerous by their nature or condition.

Preparation & Sale of Food on Church Premises

Following the introduction of recent legislation, there has been a great deal of confusion over the position of churches with regard to the provision and sale of food particularly where this has been produced by voluntary helpers.

Provided certain basic precautions are followed there is no reason whatsoever why churches should not be involved with the preparation and sale of food.

This may range from the one off annual event such as the church fete, a weekly coffee morning or lunch or a full scale catering operation providing a large number of meals on a daily basis. Different considerations apply depending on the scale of the operation, and these are outlined below.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

The law relating to food safety is covered by the Food Safety Act 1990 and Regulations made under it.

The Food Safety Act makes it an offence for anyone to sell or process for sale, food which is:

- Harmful to health
- Contaminated to such an extent that it would be unreasonable to expect it to be eaten
- Falsely described, advertised or presented
- Not what the customer can reasonably expect

The things you must do to comply with the Food Safety Act are contained in the regulations below:

FOOD SAFETY (GENERAL FOOD HYGIENE) REGULATIONS 1995

These cover the basic requirements for safe premises, general food hygiene, personal hygiene and training of food handlers. Everyone involved with food handling must have received training in basic food hygiene. More detailed information is given below.

THE FOOD SAFETY (TEMPERATURE CONTROL) REGULATIONS 1995

These regulations apply to the requirement for temperature control to all types of food which without it might support the growth of harmful bacteria or the formation of toxins.

PRODUCT SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

There are a large number of specific regulations relating to various foodstuffs such as dairy products, eggs, poultry and shellfish.

PREMISES WHICH ARE ONLY USED OCCASIONALLY FOR FOOD PREPARATION

The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 require that premises which are used occasionally for food preparation such as church halls, and movable or temporary premises such as marquees,

follow the guidance for temporary premises. The Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice published by Chadwick House Group sets out in detail a guide to compliance with the Regulations, and gives advice on good practice. The following is a summary of some of the main requirements:

- Anyone using the premises must have regard for other activities that have previously taken place in the premises. If these present a risk of food contamination, the premises should be thoroughly cleaned and if necessary disinfected before food preparation begins.
- Food contact surfaces must be in sound condition, clean and easy to disinfect.
- There must be a basin or basins for handwash only, provided with hot and cold water, soap or detergent and a means of hand drying.
- Protective clothing must be provided, and high standards of personal hygiene maintained. Any wounds must be covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing.
- It is good practice for ALL visitors to a kitchen to wear protective clothing including hats if they present a risk of contamination.
- Hot and cold water must be available for washing tools and equipment together with a supply of detergent. It is good practice to use separate sinks for food washing. Where this is not practicable the sink should be cleaned and disinfected between different activities.
- Adequate facilities must be available for maintaining and monitoring suitable food temperatures. In most circumstances foods which need temperature control for safety must be held either **HOT** (at or above 63°C) or **CHILLED** (at or below 8°C).

For hot holding, insulated boxes will only be effective over short periods of time. For chilled storage, mechanical refrigeration equipment will normally be needed to achieve satisfactory temperatures. Ready-to-eat foods must be kept away from raw foods that may contaminate them both in storage and preparation.

Preparation & Sale of Food on Church Premises

PREMISES USED FOR THE REGULAR PREPARATION OF FOOD

If meals are produced on a regular basis, in addition to the requirements outlined above, other regulations apply.

It may be necessary to provide separate sinks for food preparation and equipment washing if the volume of preparation in the kitchen demands it.

There may be a need for a means of mechanical ventilation.

FOOD PREMISES (REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS 1991

If food is provided for five or more days in any five consecutive weeks you must advise the local authority about any premises you use for storing, selling, distributing or preparing food. The majority of premises will have to be registered. However, certain premises which could include church halls may be exempt. You should contact your Local Authority Environmental Health Officer to check whether or not you need to register.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Details are given below of various publications providing more information. Further advice and information can be obtained from your Local Authority Environmental Health Department.

Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice. Catering Guide. ISBN 0900 103 00 0

Available from HMSO Bookshops or direct from Chadwick House Group Publishing Dept.
Tel: 020 7827 5882

The following are available free from the Food Standards Agency Tel: 0845 6060667

A guide to the General Food Hygiene Regulations 1995 Ref: FSA 0051

A guide to the Food Safety (Temperature Control) Regulations 1995 Ref: FSA 0148

A guide to Food Hazards and Your Business Ref: FSA 0095

Personal Safety

It is a sad fact of modern life that even when in church, we cannot be sure that we are entirely safe. The purpose of this guidance note is not to alarm but to give some simple advice as to what can be done to minimise the risks to your own safety and that of others in the church environment.

Practices that have been followed for many years without incident may no longer be safe and the fact that nothing has gone wrong in the past is no reason to be complacent. Now is the time to examine the way you do things and make any changes that are necessary.

You can do this by carrying out simple risk assessments. First of all, you need to identify what are the hazards. These are situations where there is the potential for someone to be harmed. Then you must establish what is the risk. This is the actual likelihood of someone being harmed taking into account the measures you have in place to limit the consequences. These measures are called controls. Examples of control measures are the carrying of a personal attack alarm or ensuring that there are always two people on duty in the church at any one time.

You may find that you have no controls in place at all or that they are insufficient to prevent someone from being at risk. If this is the case, you must decide what additional control measures are necessary to reduce the risk and ensure they are implemented.

The best way of going about this is to record your findings. This means listing the hazards you have identified, noting the risks and any existing controls and then noting what additional controls are necessary to ensure personal safety. Finally, you should record how these new measures are to be implemented.

WHERE RISKS TO PERSONAL SAFETY MIGHT ARISE

There are hazards not just in the church itself. The easiest way to approach risk assessment is to break things down into smaller areas, each of which can then be considered in turn. We can look at four areas:

1. PEOPLE IN CHURCH
2. PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH HALL
3. PEOPLE AT HOME
4. PEOPLE WALKING OR TRAVELLING BETWEEN ANY OF THE ABOVE

1. PEOPLE IN CHURCH

The greatest risk arises when people are on their own. This risk is increased when people are carrying cash or there is cash or other valuables on the premises. You will therefore need to look at the following situations:

- i) Are there any occasions when people are in the church on their own?

For example, you may have a "church sitter" rota but it works on the basis of only one person being there at a time. Additional controls which could be considered are always having two people on duty at any one time or providing some form of communication. This could be a mobile telephone, two-way radio or personal attack alarm connected to an alarm system. You will need to consider, however, who is available to respond to an alarm call.

- ii) When is cash collected? Collections from Sunday services may be held in a safe and then taken to the bank during the week. How many people are present when the safe is opened and what are the arrangements for taking the cash to the bank? If more than one person is involved with cash transits, one person can act as driver so that it is possible to stop directly outside the bank while the other goes inside. One person can act as a "lookout" to ensure the route is safe. It is important that times and routes for the transfer of cash are varied. Assaults on persons carrying cash often occur because a pattern can be established as to when it is going to happen. Your insurers may stipulate the numbers of persons who are required to accompany cash transits above certain amounts.
- iii) Are there any cash collection points where people are vulnerable? You will need to consider areas such as shops, bookstalls, refectories, crypts, treasuries, etc. where someone is positioned to collect entrance money or takings from safes. How remote are these areas from the rest of the building where there are likely to be other people around? Do they have any form of communication or personal attack alarm? How well lit are these areas? One possible control measure is to sell tickets from a secure central point so that persons at remote locations are not concerned with collecting cash. Areas which are in darkness or are poorly lit provide a much greater opportunity for attacks than those which are well lit and are therefore clearly visible by others.

Personal Safety

- iv) Are there any other opportunities for attacks or assaults to take place? You may organise tours to towers or roof spaces. There should always be at least two persons in charge of tours and you should always have some means of communication with the ground. The rule that you only allow pre-booked tours will considerably reduce the risk of persons demanding to be shown around straightaway. Ecclesiastical Insurance produce a Guidance Note on organising tower tours.
- v) Are there any other areas where it is possible for threats to personal safety to occur? Church porches or other concealed spaces are often used by young people and drug addicts as meeting places. This can be very intimidating for anyone coming to open up the church. You should do all you can to avoid the possibility that someone is put at risk. The fitting of locked gates to the front of open porches and ensuring all areas are well lit can reduce the practice of people congregating around the church.

If you are in an area where there is a real possibility of people being threatened by challenging behaviour then obtain specialist help from the local Crime Reduction Officer, who can be contacted via your local Police Station, so that church members have the correct training.

2. PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH HALL

Here again, the greatest risk arises when people are on their own. This is often difficult to avoid, particularly if the hall has to be opened up in the evening for lettings or church events. Avoid the collection of cash at events held in the hall and have some means of communication in the hall such as a separate telephone. Ensure that all entrances to the hall, including paths and car parks, and particularly around the entrance door and final exit door, are well lit. Car parks should be overlooked if possible and be free from excessive vegetation growth where people can be concealed. Consider carefully the sort of activities for which you allow the hall to be used. Private parties and discos can often attract the wrong sort of attention. Ensure that you have adequate supervision and stewarding for all activities.

3. PEOPLE AT HOME

The challenges presented to the clergy arising from callers to the vicarage or rectory are already well covered in the publication "Knocking at Heaven's Door". However, there may be occasions when people call at the home of any church member. It has been quite common in many churches to have a "Key Card"

near the entrance advising where the key may be obtained if the church is locked. The addresses given are often remote and the keyholders often elderly.

We would suggest that if possible the church should be left open with the valuables locked away. However, if you wish to lock the church and make the key available we would suggest that this is from a local shop, Post Office or garage which may well be protected by closed circuit television. You must not give details of parishioners names and addresses where keys can be obtained. You cannot be certain that everyone asking for the keys is of honest intent and publishing names and addresses could put people at risk. To help those who wish to look at the church, show times in the church porch or on the notice board when the church will be open and someone will be present.

People in difficulty or distress rightly look to the church for help. However, this can often be difficult for lay people to deal with adequately if they have not received the correct training. If a set of common guidelines are established to deal with these situations and they are known and followed by all parishioners, this can considerably reduce the possibility of individuals being put at risk.

For example, you may decide to have a policy that you do not give cash to casual callers but have vouchers available which can be used in a local shop or café.

Have information sheets available which can be given to callers detailing local shelters, social services, emergency social workers and other voluntary organisations.

Arrange "another appointment". Decide on fixed times and places where members of the clergy or others with specialist skills will be available to help people in need. Have these details on a card which can be handed to callers. If possible, keep a log of callers with brief details of name and reason for the call.

Parishioners should never allow callers indoors unless they are well known to them, and they should not attempt to become involved in counselling unless they are trained to do so. You have no idea of the background or psychiatric condition of the person at your door. If you have a porch, keep the door to the house locked and conduct any discussions in the porch.

Consideration must also be given to lay workers visiting other people's homes in the Parish. If you do not know them well and have any cause for concern, it may be advisable not to visit alone. Always let someone know where you are going and at what time you expect to return. Carrying a mobile phone is a sensible precaution.

Personal Safety

4. TRAVELLING BETWEEN HOME AND CHURCH

The same rules apply regarding personal safety as at other times. When walking, keep to busy, well lit routes and avoid alleyways, subways and shortcuts through back lanes or wooded areas. Carry a personal attack alarm. When driving, keep car doors locked and valuables out of sight. However, churches are often located in remote rural areas or inner city areas. In both cases, ensure that church doorways and paths are well lit, and if driving that you park as close to the church as possible.

If you are travelling alone, tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to arrive.

SELF DEFENCE

Do not play the hero. Do not attempt to hold on to cash if you are threatened. If you are asked to hand over cash then hand it over. Only sound an alarm if you feel it is safe to do so. If you have not been trained in conciliation techniques, do not get involved in an argument. Avoid confrontation. Do not get involved in a physical situation. Do not try to apprehend anyone even if you have had training in self-defence techniques. If you have had such training, only use it as a last resort

to defend yourself. Your aim should be to defuse a potentially violent situation and reduce the risk of injury to yourself and other people. As soon as possible, contact the Police and leave apprehension to them.

CONCLUSION

The key to personal safety is to avoid situations where a threat to your safety could occur. Carry out a risk assessment of your church and church hall and identify those at risk. Establish procedures and introduce control methods to reduce the possibility of risks to personal safety as much as possible. The key elements are:

- Ensure people are not left on their own, particularly when handling cash.
- Ensure there is a method of raising the alarm in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure all areas of the building, both inside and outside, are well lit and that there are no places where people can loiter.
- Have set procedures and information available for dealing with people looking for help.

Use the following table to carry out your own risk assessment.

Activity	Who is at Risk	Existing Procedure	Additional Security Measures Needed
Example: Unlocking church hall for evening functions	Caretaker	Caretaker unlocks hall on her own	Additional lighting outside hall door. Provide caretaker with personal attack alarm

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has established the principle of access as a civil right to all public buildings, which includes churches and church halls.

A legal duty is imposed by the Act upon service providers, which includes churches, to make reasonable adjustments in the way they provide their services so that disabled persons can receive the benefit of those services in the same way as can the able-bodied.

KEY DATES

Since **2nd December 1996**, it has been unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability. This includes not just access to the building but also the ability to participate and to understand what is going on.

As from **1st October 1999**, service providers have to make "reasonable adjustments" for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services, but there is no requirement to make physical alterations.

From **2004**, the Church as a service provider will have to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use its services.

It is possible that the reasonable steps that have to be taken will involve the removal of physical barriers within the building. However, alteration, avoidance or providing an alternative method of providing the service are also feasible.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Under the Act, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Impairments include sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing.

The test of whether an impairment affects normal day to day activities is whether or not it affects one of the broad categories of capacity listed in Schedule 1 to the Act. These are:

- mobility
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand, or
- perception of the risk of physical danger.

A long term effect of an impairment is one:-

- which has lasted at least 12 months, or
- where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or
- which is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

PROVISIONS FOR PERSONS NOT COVERED BY THE ACT

In spite of the limitations noted above, it would seem eminently sensible when planning the course of action necessary, to comply with the Act to make allowances for other groups of persons who may experience difficulties in using the building, even though they do not have a disability as defined by the Act.

Consideration should therefore be given not merely to the effects on wheelchair users, the visually impaired, those with hearing difficulties and persons with learning difficulties, but also:

- the elderly in general
- persons of excessively large or small stature
- children
- pregnant women
- parents and others in charge of small children, especially those with pushchairs
- those who are temporarily injured
- those who are sick or ill
- and those who may be emotionally distressed or unstable.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of the premises are due to be introduced in 2004.

DEFINITION OF PHYSICAL FEATURES

The Disability Discrimination (Services and Premises) Regulations 1999 defines "physical features" as including:

- Any feature arising from the design or construction of a building on the premises occupied by the service provider.
- Any feature on those premises of any approach to, exit from, or access to such a building.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

- Any fixtures, fittings, furnishings, furniture, equipment or materials in or on such premises, including materials brought onto the premises in the course of providing services to the public.
- Any other physical element or quality of land comprised in the premises occupied by the service provider.

All of these features are covered whether temporary or permanent.

PROVISION OF AUXILIARY AIDS

A service provider must also take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids or services if this would enable (or make it easier for) disabled people to make use of any services which it offers to the public. Examples of auxiliary aids would be:

- An induction loop system for persons with hearing difficulties.
- Signs in Braille or large text books for the visually impaired.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety requirements must not be used as an excuse for not making provision for persons with disabilities.

Whilst a service provider can justify less favourable treatment or a failure to make an adjustment, if it is necessary in order not to endanger the health or safety of any person, including a disabled person, spurious health and safety precautions provide no defence.

Special provisions must be made to ensure that persons with disabilities can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire or other emergency. The requirements of wheelchair users, those with hearing and sight impairments and other disabilities, must be taken into account when carrying out fire risk assessments and drawing up evacuation procedures.

SUGGESTED ACTION PLAN

In order to demonstrate that churches have complied with their obligations under the Act, the following should be undertaken:

- Carry out an audit of both physical and non-physical barriers to access for disabled people, and record the findings.
- Make any appropriate adjustments.
- Provide training to staff and volunteers.
- Draw the adjustments to the attention of disabled people and let them know how to request assistance.

- Monitor the effectiveness of the adjustments and revise accordingly.

CONTROLS AND COMPLIANCE

Any work which may need to be carried out as a result of the Act does not override existing planning control, whether that be planning permission, listed buildings consent, the faculty jurisdiction or the Care of Cathedrals Measure. It is most important that any work is not undertaken, particularly where it may involve the historic fabric of the building without obtaining the correct permissions.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Code of Practice 1999. DfEE

Available from HMSO. Tel: 0870 600 5522. £12.95. ISBN 0-11-271055-7.

Widening the Eye of the Needle – Access to Church Buildings for People with Disabilities.

Available from The Council for the Care of Churches. Tel: 0207 898 1866. £7.95. ISBN 0-7151-7581-5.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Rights of Access for Disabled People, Goods, Facilities and Services. The Churches Main Committee Circular No. 1999/4. £1.

Available from The Churches Main Committee. Tel: 020 7898 1861.

British Standard BS5588-8:1999 Fire Precautions in the Design, Construction and Use of Buildings – Part 8: Code of Practice for means of escape for disabled people. £50 non-members, £25 members.

Available from British Standards Institution. Tel: 0208 996 9000.

Easy Access to Historic Properties – 11 page design guide – free from English Heritage Customer Services. Tel: 0207 973 3434.

Visually Impaired People in Church – Information for Clergy and Church Workers – Free leaflet available from RNIB. Tel: 08457 023153.

Designing for Accessibility – 32 page general design guide. £15.

Available from The Centre for Accessible Environments. Tel: 0207 357 8182.

First Aid

No matter what type of premises you have and irrespective of the nature of your activities, First Aid facilities should be provided for employees and visitors in the event of illness or injury whilst on your premises.

TYPE OF FACILITIES

The type of facilities required depends on a variety of factors. Issues to consider are:

- Nature of activities undertaken (high or low risk)
- Number of people involved
- Distribution of those people
- Location of nearest doctor and ambulance station
- Accessibility in the event of an emergency

FIRST AID ARRANGEMENTS

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the arrangements for administering first aid and the location of any First Aid kits or room. This is particularly important if your activities are potentially hazardous or are carried out away from your normal place of work.

FIRST AID KITS

First Aid kits should be identified by a white cross on a green background. They should contain sufficient quantities of the required materials and be replenished as soon as possible after use. The items should include only those which the nominated First Aider has been trained to use and must be appropriate for the circumstances of use.

There is no mandatory list of items that should be included in a First Aid container. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the Approved Code of Practice to The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 say that as a guide, where no special risk arises in the workplace, a minimum stock of First Aid items would normally be:

- a leaflet giving general advice on First Aid (eg. HSE leaflet Basic Advice on First Aid at work);
- 20 individually wrapped sterile dressings (assorted sizes), appropriate to the type of work (dressings may be of a detectable type for food handlers);
- 2 sterile eye pads;
- 6 safety pins;
- 6 medium-sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 12cm x 12cm;

- 2 large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 18cm x 18cm;
- 1 pair of disposable gloves.

The Code of Practice says that tablets and medications should not be kept.

First Aid kits should be stored in an area where conditions will not readily contribute to their deterioration and be checked on a regular basis.

FIRST AID TRAINING

All First Aiders should be trained and certificates of competence obtained. Training should include specialised training on hazards specific to the activities undertaken.

FIRST AID CO-ORDINATION

Where First Aiders are not available, appointed persons may be nominated to take charge of the co-ordination of activities in the event of an emergency occurring.

Appointed persons are only responsible for summoning trained personnel or professional assistance and should not administer first aid treatment other than emergency treatment, and then only when specifically trained.

RECORDS

Records of First Aid treatment should be maintained and should contain the following information:

Name and address of person treated

Occupation

Date of entry

Date and time of incident

Place and circumstances of incident

Details of injury and treatment given

Signature and address of person making entry

How Safe is Your Church and Church Hall?

Every year, a number of accidents occur in churches, church halls, churchyards and grounds. Not only does this cause pain and suffering to those people who are injured, it can often result in serious disruption to the smooth running of the church and its various activities. For example, if a cleaner, caretaker, organist or other voluntary or paid member of the church staff is injured and unable to carry out their normal duties, it may be extremely difficult to find a replacement at short notice.

As well as the possibility that the injured person may make a claim against the church for damages in a civil action, criminal prosecutions may be brought against individuals as well as the Church Council or Trustees under Health and Safety law where penalties may be as high as a £20,000 fine and two years imprisonment.

The Incumbent, Churchwardens and other members of the Parochial Church Council have a duty of care to ensure the safety of anyone who may visit the church, hall or churchyard for any purpose. This includes paid employees, voluntary workers, regular members of the congregation, visitors and contractors who may be working on the buildings or in the churchyard.

This questionnaire is designed to help you pinpoint any potentially hazardous areas so that the necessary action may be taken to eliminate or reduce as far as possible any risk of accident.

Additional information regarding any relevant legislation or reference sources is included where appropriate.

If you answer 'NO' to any of the questions, there is a risk that an accident could happen and difficulties could occur in dealing with a claim which might be made against you, so some action on your part is necessary.

Having carried out initial assessments it is important to monitor your Health and Safety procedures to take account of changing circumstances. This should be a continuing process but at least annually you should go through this questionnaire and take any action necessary.

1. DO YOU HAVE A WRITTEN HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY?

Yes No

Health and Safety legislation applies to all places of religious worship. The Health and Safety at Work etc, Act 1974 requires every employer with five or more employees to 'prepare and bring to the notice of their employees a written statement of their general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of their employees and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out that policy'.

There will be some large churches where the Parochial Church Council actually employs five or more people and in these cases there is no doubt that a written Health and Safety Policy Statement is required.

Employers with less than five employees are exempt from the requirement for a written Health and Safety Policy. However the Health and Safety Executive now regards volunteers as employees and persons who make use of volunteers as employees. The same level of training, information and protection must be given to both volunteers and employees. In the light of this it is good practice to have a written policy which sets out your organisation and procedures for Health and Safety.

It is the duty of every employee, including part-time employees such as organists, cleaners and caretakers and so on, to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

The person responsible for enforcing the requirements of the legislation is the

Environmental Health Officer of the Local Authority.

A Health and Safety Policy for Churches is available from Ecclesiastical Insurance.

2. HAVE YOU CARRIED OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT AS REQUIRED BY THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999?

Yes No

These regulations require every employer to make 'a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking'.

Self-employed persons which include the clergy, must make an assessment of the risks to their own health and safety and also to the health and safety of persons not in their employment.

Where five or more people are employed a written record must be made of the significant findings of the assessment.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Approved Code of Practice – ISBN 0 7176 2488 9
5 Steps to Risk Assessment – INDG 163 HSE Free Leaflet

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Health and Safety Policy includes guidance for churches on carrying out risk assessments.

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3. ARE FLOOR SURFACES AND FLOOR COVERINGS IN GOOD CONDITION AND PROPERLY MAINTAINED?

Yes No

Slipping, tripping and falling are a major cause of injuries. You must ensure that there are no unexpected changes in floor level, and that floor surfaces are not sunken, cracked or damaged. Particular attention should be given to stone flags, ceramic and clay tiles and wood blocks.

Loose floor coverings, such as mats and rugs, should be avoided. Carpets must not be worn and must be securely fixed down.

[Slips and Trips, Guidance for employers on identifying hazards and controlling risks. HSE Books – HSG 155 ISBN 0 7176 1145 0](#)

4. IS THE CHURCHYARD INCLUDING PATHS, STEPS, RAMPS, DRIVEWAYS, TREES, BOUNDARY WALLS, GRAVESTONES AND MONUMENTS IN GOOD ORDER AND PROPERLY MAINTAINED?

Yes No

Paths and driveways must be free from potholes and steps must be in good condition. They must be properly drained to prevent collection of rainwater and the growth of algae. Where paths are regularly used at night they must be adequately lit. Steps and steep paths must be fitted with handrails.

Boundary walls and gates must be kept in good repair. Trees must be regularly inspected by a qualified tree surgeon and any necessary remedial work carried out. In addition to the risk of falling branches, an assessment must be made of the risk of damage to neighbouring property caused by the effect of tree roots removing moisture from the surrounding soil.

Although gravestones are the responsibility of the family of the deceased, the church is responsible where the family cannot be traced and also has a general liability for the safety of the churchyard. Gravestones, tombs and monuments must be maintained in a safe condition.

Where churchyards are still in use for burials, care must be taken to ensure that graves left open immediately prior to burials are properly shored up to prevent collapse and are safely covered over.

[Code of Safe Working Practice for Cemeteries – Available from Institute of Burial and Administration Inc., Tel: 01753 771518](#)

[The Churchyards Handbook ISBN: 0 7151 7583 1 – Available from Church House Bookshop, 31 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BN. Tel: 020 7898 1300/02.](#)

5. ARE ALL STAIRWAYS IN GOOD CONDITION AND ADEQUATELY LIT?

Yes No

All stairways must be in good condition and be adequately lit, such as towers or those which give access to organ lofts, galleries, boiler rooms or basements. Handrails must also be fitted. Particular attention must be paid to stone spiral staircases in towers where the edges of the steps are often worn. A rope handrail should be fitted as a minimum.

6. DO YOU ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO CLIMB THE TOWER OR VISIT OTHER HIGH LEVELS AND IF SO DO YOU HAVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES WHICH ARE ALWAYS FOLLOWED?

Yes No

Careful consideration must be given before allowing members of the public to climb the tower or visit other high levels in the church. An assessment must be carried out looking into all aspects of the proposed route and detailed guidelines drawn up. A detailed Guidance Note is available.

[Guidance Note – Tower Tours – Ecclesiastical Insurance.](#)

7. HAS AN ASSESSMENT BEEN CARRIED OUT OF AREAS WHERE THERE IS A RISK OF FALLS FROM A HEIGHT AND THE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TAKEN?

Yes No

Some churches contain areas where there is a risk of falls from a height such as triforia, the tops of staircases which used to lead to rood screens which have been removed and where there is low parapeting or castellations along the tops of external walls. Consideration will need to be given to the need to install permanent rails or barriers or safety latchways for use with safety harnesses. The fixing of anchor points for ladders may be sufficient where access is only occasionally required for maintenance purposes, such as the changing of light bulbs or the cleaning of gutters. In other circumstances, the installation of latchways or fixed anchor points and the use of safety harnesses, may be necessary.

8. HAS AN ASSESSMENT BEEN MADE OF THE RISKS TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF BELLRINGERS AND OTHER PERSONS ENTERING THE RINGING ROOM AND BELL CHAMBER?

Yes No

Under normal circumstances bells should be left in the 'down' position other than when being rung.

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Consideration must also be given to the means of escape in the event of an emergency, the evacuation of an injured person, providing a safe means of heating, the provision of fire extinguishers, the provision of emergency lighting and the notification of safety procedures to visiting bellringers.

[Guidance Notes for the Conditions of Use Applying to Change-ringing bells. Ecclesiastical Insurance.](#)

9. HAVE YOU CARRIED OUT AN ASSESSMENT OF ALL SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH AND PUT IN PLACE CONTROL MEASURES WHERE NECESSARY AS REQUIRED BY THE CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH REGULATIONS 1999 (COSHH)?

Yes No

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 requires that 'an employer shall not carry on any work which is liable to expose any employees to any substance hazardous to health, unless he has made a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks created by that work to the health of those employees, and of the steps that need to be taken to meet the requirements of these regulations'.

Substances most likely to be found in churches are petrol, pesticides, insecticides, weedkillers, fertilisers and liquefied petroleum gases.

All hazardous substances must be stored and used in accordance with the manufacturers instructions. Consideration should be given to replacing dangerous substances with less hazardous alternatives.

An assessment would need to be made before the removal of pigeon droppings which are often found in large quantities in towers and which can cause the disease psittacosis. This needs to be treated as a hazardous substance and specialist advice obtained.

Some churches may still have asbestos used for insulation, lagging, fire protection or in wall and roof linings. Special regulations govern the control of asbestos and if any removal of asbestos materials is required, this work can only be carried out by contractors licensed by the HSE for asbestos removal.

[Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 Approved Code of Practice 1999 – ISBN 0 7176 1670 3](#)

[The Control of Asbestos at Work – HSE Books L27 ISBN 0 7176 1673 8](#)

10. ARE ALL ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS INCLUDING WIRING, SWITCHGEAR AND ANY FIXED MACHINERY SUCH AS ORGAN BLOWER MOTORS AND ALL PORTABLE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES IN GOOD CONDITION

AND PROPERLY MAINTAINED AS REQUIRED BY THE ELECTRICITY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1989?

Yes No

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 require that all electrical systems shall be of such design, construction and installation as to prevent danger.

The Council for the Care of Churches recommends that fixed installations should be inspected and tested at five yearly intervals.

Portable electrical appliances need to be examined at regular intervals with the frequency of such examinations being set by experience. This will probably need to be at least annually, with equipment which is subject to heavy usage, such as vacuum cleaners, needing to be examined more frequently.

External lighting including floodlighting and associated wiring must be installed to IEE Regulations (BS7671). Temporary wiring is not acceptable.

[HSE Guide Maintaining Portable and Transportable Electrical Equipment 1994 HSG 107 – ISBN 0 7176 0715 1](#)

[HSR25 Memorandum of Guidance on the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 – ISBN 0 7176 1602 9](#)

[Institute of Electrical Engineers' Regulations for Electrical Installations, 16th Edition BS 7671 1992 – ISBN 0 85296 988 0](#)

11. DO YOU HAVE FORMAL SAFETY PROCEDURES IN PLACE IF YOUR CHURCH IS USED FOR PUBLIC PERFORMANCES AND FOR MAJOR SERVICES AT CHRISTMAS AND EASTER?

Yes No

If your church is regularly used for large concerts and services, a written procedure should be in place detailing such matters as the number of stewards required and their duties. The procedures should include a detailed evacuation plan. Consideration will need to be given to the installation of an automatic fire alarm system, the use of the public address system for the giving of instructions in the event of an emergency, the installation of emergency lighting, and the training of stewards and other staff or volunteers in the use of fire fighting equipment.

12. DO YOU HAVE REGULAR INSPECTIONS OF LIFTING EQUIPMENT?

Yes No

Many churches have large, heavy ornate font covers which are raised and lowered by a system of pulleys and counterweights. Similar mechanisms are also used to raise and lower candelabra and sanctuary lamps. Winches and hoists may also be

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found in towers for the raising and lowering of bells or other materials and equipment. The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 require such items to be inspected on a regular basis by a competent person. An Engineering Insurance Company surveyor would be a competent person and a reasonable inspection period would be annually.

Safe use of Lifting Equipment. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. HSE – L113 – ISBN 0 7176 1628 2

13. HAS AN ASSESSMENT BEEN CARRIED OUT TO ENSURE THERE IS NO RISK OF INJURY FROM GLASS IN DOORS AND WINDOWS?

Yes No

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 Approved Code of Practice requires that safety glazing is used in all windows below waist height and in (or next to) doors below shoulder height or elsewhere if there is a likelihood of injury. Safety glass includes toughened or laminated glass. Alternatively barriers may be used to prevent persons falling through vulnerable windows. Church halls built during the 1960's and 1970's may well include low level windows and doors which will need to be upgraded to comply with the regulations.

Workplace Health Safety and Welfare HSE L24 – ISBN 0 7176 0413 6

14. IS ALL PLANT AND MACHINERY IN GOOD CONDITION AND REGULARLY MAINTAINED AND ARE ALL TOOLS AND OTHER ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT SUCH AS LADDERS, SCAFFOLDING TOWERS AND STAGING ROUTINELY CHECKED AND REPAIRED?

Yes No

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 require assessments to be carried out to ensure that all work equipment is suitable for the purpose and is adequately maintained. People using the equipment must be given adequate instructions, information and training. Suitable inspections need to be carried out by a suitably qualified person if work equipment is likely to become unsafe due to the environment, damage or wear.

Boilers should be regularly serviced. Gas boilers should be checked annually by a CORGI registered installer. Lawnmowers and other items of churchyard maintenance equipment must be regularly checked and serviced. Young persons must not be allowed to operate any machinery without proper instruction and supervision. Personal

protective equipment, such as visors for use with strimmers, must be available and be maintained.

Safe Use of Work Equipment HSE L22 – ISBN 0 7176 1626 6

15. HAS AN ASSESSMENT BEEN CARRIED OUT INTO ANY MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS?

Yes No

In many churches, there is a constant moving of chairs, staging, pianos and so on to cater for different layouts and services.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 require assessments to be carried out of all manual handling operations. If possible manual handling should be avoided altogether. Where this is not possible, training should be given and the risk must be reduced as far as possible by the use of mechanical aids and manual handling kept to an absolute minimum.

Manual Handling HSE L23 – ISBN 0 7176 2415 3

16. HAS AN ASSESSMENT BEEN CARRIED OUT ON ANY CATERING UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH FOOD HYGIENE REGULATIONS?

Yes No

Catering in churches can range from a one off event such as the annual fete to the regular provision of meals on a daily basis. The HMSO publish a guide to good Hygiene Practice which gives advice on how to comply with The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. Premises which are used occasionally for food preparation such as church halls must follow the guidelines for temporary premises. Where food is prepared on a regular basis the General Requirements will need to be followed and you may need to register with the Environmental Health Department of the Local Authority.

Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice. Catering Guide. ISBN 0900 103 00 0

Available from HMSO Bookshops or direct from Chadwick House Group Publishing Dept. Tel: 020 7827 5882

17. DO YOU HAVE SYSTEMS IN PLACE FOR THE RECORDING OF ACCIDENTS AND THE REPORTING OF INJURIES, DISEASES AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES?

Yes No

The HMSO Accident Book ISBN 0 11 762 606 6 satisfies the regulations about keeping records of

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accidents to people at work.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) requires employers and people in control of premises to report certain types of injury, occupational ill health and dangerous occurrences to their enforcing authority. For places of public worship this is the Local Environmental Health Department.

Records of accidents to members of staff, volunteers and visitors must be kept.

If possible you should obtain written statements from any witnesses and record their names and addresses.

In the case of back, neck and other serious injuries the injured person should be required to visit their General Practitioner as soon as possible.

[A Guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 – HSE L73 – ISBN 0 7176 2431 5](#)

18. DO YOU HAVE PROCEDURES IN PLACE FOR THE VETTING OF PERSONS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

Yes No

It is most important that adequate safeguards are taken in the selection of persons wishing to work with children. Anyone with a history of child abuse must not be allowed to come into contact with young people.

The House of Bishops has produced a Policy on Child Protection and your Diocese will have a Child Protection Policy which you should adopt. The Diocesan Child Protection Officer will be able to advise you and explain the Diocesan Child Protection Policy.

Other publications available on the Home Office Website are:

[Safe From Harm.](#)
[Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable.](#)
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Another useful publication is:
[Safe and Alert](#)

Available from the National Centre for Volunteering Tel: 020 752 08900

19. DO YOU HAVE PROCEDURES IN PLACE FOR FETES AND OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES?

Yes No

There are various hazards involved with such things as bouncy castles, fireworks and charity walks. Certain events such as abseiling down towers will require specialist advice.

Ecclesiastical Insurance publishes Guidance Notes

on a number of activities. These include:

- Guidance Notes on the use of inflatable bouncy castles
- Guidance Notes for the organisation of bonfire and firework displays
- Guidance Notes for the organisers of charity walks.

20. DO YOU HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS?

Yes No

We would suggest that every Parochial Church Council appoints a member with specific responsibility for Health and Safety. This person should lead a small sub-committee, who should be given the responsibility of carrying out the various assessments outlined above and reporting back to the full PCC.

It should be remembered that faculties will be needed for most alterations to the fabric of the building.

21. HAVE YOU CARRIED OUT AN ASSESSMENT OF YOUR BUILDINGS TO ENSURE THEY CAN BE USED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?

Yes No

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires that all disabled persons are able to use a building and have access to the services provided within it.

Service providers, which includes churches, have to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people.

From 2004, service providers will have to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use its services.

It should also be remembered that a faculty will be required for most alterations made to the fabric of the building.

[Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Code of Practice – ISBN 0 11 270954 0](#)

HSE Books are available from:

HSE Books

PO Box 1999

Sudbury

Suffolk CO10 6FS

Tel: 01787 881165

Fax: 01787 313995

HSE InfoLine: 08701 545500

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22. HAVE YOU CARRIED OUT A FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT?

Yes No

It is a requirement of The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 as amended by The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Amendment Regulations 1999 that employers undertake a fire risk. The regulations apply if you employ staff and apply to virtually all places of work including churches.

To comply with regulations you must;

Assess the fire risks in the workplace (either as part of your general review of health and safety risks which you already carry out or, if you wish, as a specific exercise). If you have five or more employees you must record the findings of the risk assessment, although we would strongly recommend recording irrespective of the number of employees.

Check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.

Check that people who may be in the building can get out safely

Provide reasonable fire fighting equipment.

Check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire.

Check and maintain your fire safety equipment

If you have already taken sensible and appropriate fire safety measures, little or no further action may be necessary.

Information for employers about the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 are contained in the booklet "Fire Safety – An Employers Guide" available by mail order from The Stationery Office, PO Box 276, London, SW8 5DT. Tel: 0870 600 5522 or fax: 0870 600 5533 or from The Stationery Office Bookshops, accredited agents and good book shops.

Specific advice for churches is given in the Circular No 1998/2 "Fire Precautions Guide" available from The Churches Main Committee, 1, Millbank, London, SW1P 3JZ. Tel: 020 7898 1861.

Free advice is also available from your local fire brigade who are responsible for enforcing the regulations. The telephone number for non-emergency calls can be found in your local telephone directory.

For insurance you can believe in, choose Ecclesiastical.

The following Guidance Notes are also available from your Insurance Consultant and Surveyor or by calling our Church Department on: 0845 7773322

Section 1: Fire



Section 2: Security



Section 4: Church Functions

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