



**AUGUST 2024**

**COACH HOUSE CHURCH**

# **FIRE POLICY**

Name: Coach House Church

Assessment carried out by: Rebekah Baker

Date of next review: 15/08/25

Date assessment was carried out: 15/08/24

## **1. Role of safety officer**

Coach House Church, has given responsibility for overseeing Fire Safety to the Trustees who may appoint a competent person (the Safety Officer) to oversee all practical issues on their behalf.

Anyone visiting the premises, particularly regular visitors, should ensure that any potential fire hazard is drawn to the attention of the Safety Officer, a member of the leadership team, or a trustee. No one should do anything on the premises to increase the risk of fire without a risk analysis first being completed and accepted. Leaders of activities need to be aware of what to do in the case of Fire.

## **2. Employment**

The Church employs a pastor, and from time to time other employees, who do not live on the premises. All employees will be shown a copy of the fire policy and evacuation procedures as soon as their employment begins.

For contractors or anyone temporarily working on the premises or using them for any other event, a copy of the fire policy and evacuation procedures is available in the Church Library or on the church website.

## **3. The Premises and Buildings**

A diagram of the buildings is shown in the Appendix.

The premises has its front on the A6 Wellington Road N, with the garden wall topped by steel railings. High post and panel or steel palisade fencing form the remainder of the perimeter.

A tarmac carpark surrounds the building with a garden to the rear. Located next to the garden is a concrete and timber garage with a corrugated steel roof where a garden mower and other equipment and supplies are stored, including paints and the like.

There are two principal buildings, connected by a link corridor.

The older building (c1900) is a traditionally constructed 4 storey structure comprising brick walls, timber floors, tiled roof and includes cellars with a concrete floor.

The 'Hub' meeting space occupies much of the Ground Floor along with a kitchen and a disabled WC. For everyday use the exit from the upper floors is via a central staircase enclosed by a fire resistant partition at ground floor level. In an emergency, the first floor windows at the front can also be used as an exit.

The attic is used as storage as there are no adequate fire exits for more than a few people.

Two exits are available from the cellar, one to the carpark and one to the Ground Floor.

A roller shutter offers separation of the Kitchen from the Ground Floor 'Hub'.

Double doors allow exit to the car park. There are also double doors to the 'Sanctuary'

The 'Sanctuary' occupies the newer building (c1984) along with toilets. This is a traditionally constructed single storey structure with brick walls, timber floor and a timber trussed roof with felt finish. With a capacity of up to 200, it has three exits; a stage fire exit, double door exits to the car park and another exit to the link corridor, from which there are exits to the car park.

#### **4. Identification of issues that contribute to potential hazards.**

##### Frequency of fires

There has been no recorded fire in the building.

##### Potential sources of ignition

- Note that smoking on the premises is now specifically forbidden by law and has been a church rule for decades past.
- Events using small numbers of candles, such as carols by candlelight are held, but are strictly controlled.
- Food is cooked on the premises typically every few weeks, and beverages are prepared regularly. There is an electric water-heater, and an induction cooking hob with two electric ovens in the kitchen of the Hub. Occasionally a barbecue is held in the garden area.
- Boxes of Matches for igniting cooking appliances etc, are kept on the premises.
- There are a number of electrical appliances that incidentally produce low- level heat output, but all of these devices are ventilated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Electrical devices are Portable Appliance Tested so electrical fittings should not become overheated.

##### Flammable materials

- Other than the main structure, identified above, relatively small quantities of flammable materials are kept on the premises.
- Limited amounts of paper for printing and toilet rolls are stored. Artwork or banners may be displayed on the walls. For short periods, scenery may be displayed, usually in the sanctuary.
- The Crèche and 'Mother and Toddler' activities use plastic toys and foam mattresses that are stored in the attic, in the creche room, in children's church or in a small cupboard in the Hub.
- Cleaning materials are stored in a locked cleaning cupboard next to the kitchen.
- Each event is responsible for cleaning to prevent a build up of litter.
- All new furniture carries the mark ensuring that fabric materials are fire retardant.
- Each year accumulated material and items no longer used are disposed of.
- Arson relating to Churches is not unknown even in the UK. Although this possibility exists, a determined attempt at arson is beyond reasonable control. The premises are locked and alarmed when no one is using the premises and the intruder alarm should be heard by the neighbours and the alarm will notify the call list.
- A car in the car park being set on fire by vandals is also a possibility with the attendant danger of an exploding fuel tank. Such a possibility would be dealt with according to the circumstances. Until the Fire Service arrived everyone would be kept away from the car park area and stay on the grass area at the rear of church.

**5. People on premises, particularly those at higher risk.**

There is a children's church that meets upstairs. All activities are supervised with adult/child ratios 1:8 or less. The supervising adults must be aware of escape routes and must take charge of the children they are responsible for to ensure that they vacate the building safely. Registers/attendance sheets should be taken out of the building with them to ensure that all children are accounted for.

People on the premises may have additional needs.

The majority of the main congregation is elderly, and they also meet in the Hub. Some have walking difficulties. These may require assistance if rapid exit was required.

People may be unfamiliar with the premises may be on site, particularly for weddings and funerals.

**6. Precautions**

All fire exits (except the windows) have "Fire Exit" signs above them.

**6.1 Smoke alarms.**

Smoke alarms are fitted and checked and distributed as below:-

Location	Number
Hub	2
Hub/Sanctuary Corridor	1
Kitchen	1
Sanctuary	2
Meeting room	1
Upstairs corridor	2
Children's church	1
Office	1
Creche	1
Records room	1
Attic	5
Cellar	7

## 6.2 Call points

Call points are fitted and distributed as below:-

Location	Number
Sactuary	2
Hub	1
Stairs to first floor	1
Upstairs	1
Attic	1
Cellar	2

## 6.3 Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are maintained on an annual basis by the Fire Protection Consultants Ltd. A record is kept of the maintenance/replacement. Current sites of fire extinguishers and fire blankets are below.

Location	Type	Size	Date of last service
Sanctuary (Fire Exit)	Foam Spray	6L	11/2022
Entrance	Foam Spray	6L	11/2022
Sanctuary (Hub Exit)	CO2	2kg	11/2022
Hub/Sanctuary corridor	Foam Spray	6L	11/2022
Kitchen	CO2	2kg	11/2022
Kitchen	Wet Chemical	3L	11/2022
Hub	Foam Spray	6L	11/2022
Upstairs corridor	Water	6L	11/2022
Upstairs corridor	Water	6L	11/2022
Upstairs corridor	CO2	2kg	11/2022
Attic	Foam Spray	3L	11/2022
Attic	Foam Spray	3L	11/2022
Cellar	Foam Spray	6L	11/2022
Cellar	Foam Spray	6L	11/2022
Garage	Foam Spray	2L	06/2011
Kitchen	Fire Blanket	1.2m x 1.2m	11/2022

#### 6.4 Other precautions

- In all fires calling the Fire Service is a priority.
- The main gates are kept clear for the access of emergency vehicles.
- When the premises are not in use windows and doors are kept closed.
- The fire assembly point is in the car park outside the Church, next to the pedestrian exit (marked on floor plan)
- Electrical devices are over-current protected by trips in the main switch box.
- The evacuation plan gives details of procedures should a fire occur.

This version of the Fire Policy approved by the Trustees August 2022

First version, 06 August 2020

Reviewed 15 August 2024

Next review after August 2025