

WEST CRAVEN BAPTIST CHURCH – Health and Safety Policy

This policy pertains to both our buildings:

**WCBC@Barnoldswick, Manchester Road, Barnoldswick. BB18 5NZ
(BBC)**

WCBC@Mount Zion, Water Street, Earby. BB18 6QS (MZ)

Where arrangements differ for each location, this is clearly set out in the document.

General Statement of Policy

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees, casual labour and voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church building.

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

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it is operated will be reviewed by the Trustees at least once every three years and the appropriate changes made, Employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Signed

Secretary/Administrator/Trustee

Date

Policy Review Date: August 2026

Allocation of Duties

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Trustees who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church personnel. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list amended accordingly.

Responsibility of the Trustees

The Trustees have the general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented, that the arrangements outlined in this policy are updated as necessary, and to delegate tasks as appropriate.

The named trustee for Health and Safety is *Helen Edmondson*.

Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

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

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

1. Comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.
2. Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
3. Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person.
4. Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
5. Not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Arrangements

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

Accidents and First Aid

First aid boxes and accident books are located in:

BBC – Narthex, Downstairs Hall

MZ – Kitchen Cupboard

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident books and our insurers advised accordingly. If rooms are let to outside organisations, they are told in writing that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in one of the accident books. Accident books and accident records are reviewed regularly.

RIDDOR Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

Under RIDDOR there is a statutory requirement to report certain types of accident, dangerous occurrences and disease to the enforcing authorities. Fatal accidents, major injuries and injuries which involve the injured person being absent from work for more than seven days must be reported to the enforcing authorities. So must diseases and certain dangerous occurrences, as defined by the regulations.

These accidents will be reported by the health and safety trustee or delegated person who has details of required procedures in a separate file.

Fire Safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Thus we undertake the following:

- An assessment of the fire risks in the church building and the risks to our neighbours. Reviewed every five years.
- A check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
- A check that people who may be in the building can get out safely including the provision of emergency lighting/battery-operated torches and fire signage.
- To provide reasonable fire fighting equipment.
- A check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire.

- A regular check that our fire fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

BBC - worship room, narthex, upstairs kitchen, downstairs entrance, downstairs kitchen and Nathan Smith Hall.

MZ – front and back of main worship room, kitchen, basement.

They are checked monthly, and annually by Kilblaze Ltd., Fire Protection Service, Colne, BB8 7NX.

Fire alarm system and smoke detectors

These are checked monthly.

Other fire protection equipment

Fire blankets are kept in the following locations:

BBC – downstairs kitchen

MZ - kitchen

Fire blankets are checked regularly.

Evacuation Procedure

For services and events where the congregation/audience exceeds 30 people our procedures for stewarding/evacuation are as follows:

All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences and be clearly marked as fire exits using the 'Running Man' symbol. A check must be made that access to all doors is clear. This will be done by the Senior Steward, who will lock the doors after the event ends.

If someone detects a fire they must alert occupants by breaking the glass panel on one of the alarms. The alarm will sound and, if the electricity fails, emergency lighting (where available) will come into operation, or the use of or battery operated torches employed. If this happens during a service, an announcement to leave the building through the nearest emergency exit as quickly and calmly as possible will be made by the Senior Steward. They will ensure evacuation has begun and telephone the emergency services by mobile phone. Occupants of the building must make their way to the nearest assembly point in order to be accounted for. If possible the fire could be tackled by a suitably trained individual using one of the appliances provided, without them taking personal risk.

Assembly Points

BBC - Occupants of the building will be asked to congregate either across the street on North Street or outside the Old Police Station on Manchester Road.

MZ - Occupants of the building will be asked to congregate in the car park directly outside the building, or in the case of larger fires at the green outside The White Lion Pub.

Evacuation Drills

An annual meeting of stewards and organisational leaders will be held to ensure that evacuation procedures are fully understood.

If you discover a fire (no matter how small)

1. Immediately raise the alarm.
2. Telephone the emergency services (Tel: 999, and ask for fire service)
3. Check the building for occupants.
4. Attack the fire if possible and within your capability, using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk.
5. If not possible to attack the fire or if you are unsure which extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring all doors are closed behind you.
6. Evacuate to the designated assembly points:
BBC - from upstairs assemble across the street on North Street, from downstairs assemble on Manchester Road, outside the Old Police Station.
MZ - in the car park directly outside the building, or in the case of larger fires at the green outside The White Lion Pub.
7. Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of any other emergency, such as accident, requiring ambulance or other emergency services, please phone 999, giving details as requested.

Addresses are:

WCBC@Barnoldswick, Manchester Road, Barnoldswick. BB18 5NZ
(What3Words: crops.fingernails.twitches)

WCBC@Mount Zion, Water Street, Earby. BB18 6QS
(What3Words: tender.lungs.pupils)

Electrical Safety

A list of our portable electrical appliances is kept. Plugs, cables and sockets are checked annually to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. If any repairs are needed they will be reported to the trustees for action. All our portable electrical equipment will be PAT tested, kept up to date, and any unsafe equipment disposed of.

A visual inspection of the fixed electrical installation will be carried out annually and any defects reported to the trustees for action. Every five years our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a contractor who is a 'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT and any remedial work will be carried out.

It is our policy not to sell any second-hand electrical goods, unless appropriately PAT tested.

As misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires, injury or even death all employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:

1. Visually check all electrical equipment before use.
2. Report all faults immediately to the health and safety trustee.
3. Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.
4. Any electrical equipment brought on to the premises and used should be PAT tested as required and kept up to date.
5. Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods.
6. Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

Gas equipment safety

Our gas boilers are maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the gas safety register. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately. The plant room door is kept locked and access is limited to key holders.

Hazardous Substances

A list of all hazardous substances used in the church building will be maintained. Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Those we do have are used responsibly and kept in a secure cupboard. Access to the store is limited to key holders and a warning notice is posted on the door. Any cleaning agents in the kitchens are kept out of children's reach and have safety caps where appropriate. Protective gloves are provided. There is no asbestos in the building.

Safety of Plant and Machinery

A list of all items of plant and machinery will be maintained. This will include rules and procedures for use, including the protective equipment needed.

Procedures are as follows:

1. Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.
2. Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made.
3. After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used.
4. All plant and machinery must be in safe working condition and correctly adjusted before use.
5. The appropriate protective equipment must be worn before operating any plant or machinery.
6. No persons under the age of 18 may operate any power driven item of plant or machinery.
7. Ladders may be used for work of short duration, when it is not practicable to erect a scaffold or work platform, provided they can be safely secured.
8. Any defect or damage to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the health and safety trustee or delegated person.
9. All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.
10. Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have told someone of the work they are undertaking and the safety procedure has been checked.

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

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every quarter of all floors and stairs in the building and all outdoor paths and steps. Any defects will be reported to the trustees who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

Lighting

In order to ensure that the church building is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every month to check all lights are working. Any bulbs that need replacing will be reported to the health and safety trustee or delegated person who will replace the bulbs following appropriate safety procedures.

Working at High Levels

Any work at high level on the building, internally or externally will be carried out by approved contractors. Ladders and stepladders are available for the following work which can be carried out without special agreement: changing light bulbs, hanging

banners and cleaning. These tasks will be carried out by competent volunteers. Ladders should not be used by lone workers.

Preparation of Food

1. The appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs are followed.
2. Those handling foodstuffs should have completed a food hygiene course, and refresher training carried out every 4 years.
3. Food stuffs may only be prepared in the kitchens.
4. Work surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and disinfected before preparation commences.
5. Containers are provided for storing tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits.
6. 'Free from' items should be stored and prepared separately, using separate utensils in order to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
7. There is a fridge in all our buildings.
8. Utensils and equipment, including water heaters, oven and microwave oven, are kept in good, clean working order.
9. We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

Manual handling – lifting, carrying and moving loads

It is sometimes necessary to move loads manually. Lifting of heavy furniture should be carried out by two persons. Tables should be stacked carefully to avoid collapse and chairs should not be stacked more than three high. Lifting aids should be made use of as needed.

Display screen equipment

See attached risk assessment for worship room computer and screen.

Hazardous buildings/glazing

The buildings are inspected every month and any defects reported immediately to the trustees and the procedures put in hand for repairs. Where necessary, temporary measures are put in place to ensure there is no risk of injury or accident until the repair has been made. Any glass in windows below waist height and in doors or beside doors below shoulder height is of a safety material or is protected against breakage.

Safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk

See attached policy which is reviewed annually.

Personal safety and risk assessments for activities

Risk assessments will be carried out to assess risks to persons working alone in the church or handling cash and other valuables. Also for all areas of church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Separate risk assessments will be carried out and recorded for individual church activities (for example: toddler groups, crib service, baptisms)

Contractors

Contractors are responsible for their own health and safety. They must have their own health and safety policy and appropriate Public and Employers' Liability Insurance. They must be made aware of the Church's Health & Safety Policy and comply with it, co-operating with church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.

Information and enforcement

Environmental Health Service information:

Environmental Health Department, Borough of Pendle, Fleet Street Depot, Fleet Street, Nelson. BB9 7YQ

Tel: 01282 661199

Health & Safety Executive Information Line: 0300 003 1747

Health and Safety Law Poster

A copy of the Health and Safety Law poster is displayed in each church building.

Public Liability Insurance

The Public Liability Insurance certificate is displayed in each church building.

Helen Edmondson and Melanie Mitchell

August 2023