

# **Kidderminster Evangelical Church**

## **Fire Safety Policy and Procedures**

**Dated: July 2020**

**to be reviewed annually by Trustees**

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## **Section 1 Fire Safety Responsibilities**

### **Overall responsibility for Fire Safety of the Church**

#### **Elders/Charity Trustees**

The Elders/Charity Trustees together are responsible for the premises and church run activities on site with respect to fire safety and are expected to comply with the legal regulations and to maintain an up to date assessment of fire risks and actions taken to mitigate them. Items relating to the fulfilment of this responsibility should be discussed regularly at the quarterly Elders/Trustees (Management) meeting and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

One of the Elders/Charity Trustees will take the lead in fulfilling this responsibility, reporting to the quarterly Elders/Charity Trustees (Management) meetings on matters relating to fire safety.

#### **Property Manager**

A volunteer property manager, usually a deacon elected by the church meeting, may be given delegated responsibility for the day to day management of fire safety matters for the church as set out in their Role Description, reporting to the Elder/Charity Trustee with lead responsibility.

The person carrying out the overall responsibility will be responsible for ensuring that the required signage relating to fire safety and equipment is displayed in the church.

### **Responsibility for fire safety during meetings/activities run by the church on site**

#### **Meeting/Activity leaders**

The designated leader(s) of a meeting or activity run or supervised by the church as authorised and appointed from the church members by the Elders/Charity Trustees has responsibility for assessing and maintaining fire safety and carrying out fire procedures in the case of a fire.

### **Responsibility for fire safety during meetings/activities run in partnership with the church but managed by outside organisations**

Elders/Trustees to ensure that outside organisation have been given appropriate information on fire safety and procedures relating to the church building so that the outside organisation takes responsibility for fire safety and procedures during the meetings/activities they manage.

Employees or church members who are involved as volunteers in the meeting/activity run by outside organisations should provide advice and help in respect of fire safety and procedures during the activity/meeting.

See appendix A for current list of activities and people with responsibility for fire safety

## Section 2 Fire Safety for meetings/activities

### General

The leader of a meeting is responsible for fire safety and procedures for the meeting and should familiarise themselves with the instructions in sections 2 and 3 and fire protection and evacuation procedures and routes for the building. Smoking is prohibited in the building and leaders should ensure his is adhered to.

### Planning and setting up for meeting/activity

The leader(s) of activities should assess additional risks to fire safety due to the general nature of the meeting/activity they are running, such as numbers involved, whether children or vulnerable, disabled people are involved in the activity, and consider and take appropriate actions to mitigate these additional risks if possible.

In setting up for meetings legal requirements relating to fire safety, such as maximum numbers seating arrangement, must be met, and any additional risks to fire safety due to particular nature of an activity involved within the meeting should be identified and actions taken to reduce the risk as far as possible.

**Note:** If candles or open flames are used during the meeting an appropriate fire extinguisher should be placed nearby for use if necessary. If tea lights are used they should be on proper stands or within glass jar. If a match is used to light and the burnt end of the match drops in the tea light the tea light should be extinguished and the end of match removed. It can form a second wick and double the heat given off by the tea light causing fire risk.

### Opening up for meeting (See Appendix D for Fire Safety Checklist prior to meeting)

Leader(s) of the activity/meeting must check that all fire exits are clear inside and out and that the padlock is removed from the side gate by the car park. Check the alarm light is showing normal operation and firefighting equipment is in its place. A visual check should be made of the premises to make sure there are no additional fire risks on site or obstacles to evacuation if needed. Only PAT tested electrical equipment should be used during the meeting.

### During the meeting

The leader(s) should maintain vigilance for any fire risks that arise or situations that would cause difficulty for evacuation.

The leader(s) should be aware of any participants in the meeting/activity who would need assistance on an evacuation and designate someone to help the individual in case of the need to evacuate.

### Closing up after a meeting

The leader(s) of a meeting should at the end of a meeting, having cleared away as appropriate:

- ! Check that no additional fire risks have been left in the building;
  
- ! Check that the building is empty, especially that no-one is behind closed door in the rear or front toilets or in the kitchen, vestry/office or the storeroom;
  
- ! Check that no unnecessary electrical items have been left turned on/plugged in;
  
- ! Identified any property, fabric or equipment that has been damaged or presents a health and safety and/or fire risk and make a report to the Property Manager or appropriate Elder/Charity Trustee;
  
- ! Check all fire doors are securely closed, that side gate is locked, lights are turned off and entrance door is properly locked.

### **Section 3 Fire Procedure in the event of a fire or suspected fire during a meeting**

The fire alarm may be activated automatically by smoke in the rear hall or heat in the kitchen. A person discovering a fire or seeing smoke on the premises should raise the alarm by informing the leader(s) of the meeting/activity or breaking the glass on a fire point to activate the fire alarm.

**The break glass fire activation points** are situated in the kitchen by the door into the church, beside the fire exit in the rear hall on the car park side and beside the fire exit through the toilet hallway off the rear hall.

The leader(s) should maintain calm and **tell everyone to evacuate the building** through the nearest safe fire exit without taking time to collect their personal belongings. Fire exits are marked with a fire exit sign, being the double doors or the disabled entrance at the front of the building, the door adjacent to the kitchen, the door on the car park side of the rear hall and the external door through the toilet hallway off the rear hall. The leader should, if safe to do so, check for full evacuation of the premises, closing doors on leaving.

People should be **directed to assemble in the church car park away** from the church building and as far as possible the leader should account for all people who were present in the meeting.

If there is evidence of a fire the leader should **call the fire brigade** or designate a responsible person to do so using a mobile phone, or from a neighbouring house, giving the address as Kidderminster Evangelical Church, Greatfield Road, DY11 6PP (between Hemming Street and Spencer Street). The leader or designated person should wait to **meet the fire brigade on arrival** with a report of what has happened.

**Foam Fire Extinguishers** are available by the front disabled entrance, by the fire exit adjacent to the kitchen, by the fire exit on the car park side of the rear hall and by the fire exit through the rear hall toilet hallway. A **Carbon Dioxide Extinguisher** is available by the fire exit adjacent to the kitchen. A **Fire Blanket** is available in the kitchen beside the door to the main church.

#### **Gas**

The gas supply valve is in the vestry/office by the gas meter behind the white boarding. There is also a gas boiler and hob in the kitchen.

#### **Electricity**

The mains electricity supply switch is in the wooden box in the main church to the left of the sliding doors as you enter. There is also an electricity fuse box in the toilet hallway off the rear hall, high up to the left as you enter the toilet hallway.

#### **Flammable materials**

No highly flammable materials are regularly stored on the premises.

#### **Fire Alarm**

The fire alarm control box is situated in the toilet hallway off the rear hall on the left hand wall opposite the toilets.

#### **Reporting a fire to the Elders/Charity Trustees**

If one of the Elders/Charity Trustees is not present at the meeting the leader should report the fire and any damage to an Elder/Charity Trustee as soon as possible after the event.

*(This and the previous page should be copied for all leaders of meetings/activities and a laminated copy should be kept in the pulpit, in the kitchen and in the letter rack in the vestry/office.)*

## **Section 4 Fire Safety and Procedure Training**

### **Basic Level in house training**

The Elders/Charity Trustees will ensure that all appointed leaders of meetings run by the church have read sections 1 to 3 of this document and have received a copy of section 2 & 3.

An annual meeting will be held at the church of Elders/Charity Trustees, all appointed leaders of meetings, church welcome team and any other appropriate church members to talk through the fire risks and fire safety and procedures for the church and the meetings held on the premises. The evacuation plan for different scenarios will be discussed.

Annually leaders of meetings will brief attendees at the meetings they run on fire safety and procedures for raising the alarm and evacuation of the building.

All church members will be reminded of fire safety and procedures at the Church AGM.

A record will be kept of the training and noted in the minutes of the quarterly Elders/Charity Trustees (Management) meeting.

### **Additional training**

If thought necessary by the Elders/Charity Trustees, from time to time training on fire risk and safety, as well as use of fire extinguishers from outside professionals, will be arranged for activity leaders in the church and others church members for whom it would be useful.

## **Section 5    General buildings and equipment maintenance and inspection**

### **Ongoing (See section 2)**

Leaders of activities report to the appropriate Elder/Charity Trustee or Property Manager, if appointed, any defects, breakages or other damage, to the building fabric or equipment of the church or any other concerns about health and safety risks, including fire safety risks. The Elder/Charity Trustee will make a report of these items to the quarterly Elders/Charity Trustees (Management) meeting.

### **Monthly**

The appropriate Elder/Charity Trustee or Property Manager, if appointed, should do a walk around the premises, visually checking security, electrical sockets and equipment in regular use, gas appliances and all areas for health and safety and fire risks, noting any matters of concern and taking action to remedy.

### **Quarterly**

The Elders/Charity Trustees at their quarterly Management meeting will do a walk around the premises, inside and out, to identify any health and safety risks, including fire safety risks as well as any matters for ongoing maintenance of the building and fabric of the church and maintenance of the grounds. A quarterly report is to be kept along with plans for action, which is to be reviewed at the next quarterly meeting. This will be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

## **Section 6 Fire Safety equipment, maintenance, testing and inspection**

### **Weekly**

The responsible Elder/Trustee or Property Manager or other designated person will carry out the following:

- ! Test the fire alarm panel and sounder are working by triggering one call point (break glass alarm activation point) using the appropriate key. Call points should be tested in strict rotation week by week. The test should be recorded in the log book and any failure noted and reported for maintenance.
- ! Visually check that all firefighting equipment (4AFF fire extinguishers; 1 CO2 extinguisher; and 1 fire blanket) are in their correct place and have not been discharged or lost pressure or suffered any obvious damage. This check should be recorded in the log book and any concerns reported for maintenance as appropriate.
- ! Check all fire doors are clear, open properly and that all the external routes from the door are clear round to the car park. This check should be recorded in the log book.

### **Monthly**

The responsible Elder/Trustee or Property Manager or other designated person will carry out the following:

- ! Test the emergency lighting system by simulation of failure of the normal circuit using the appropriate key at the light switch board. Allow emergency lights to be on for 30 minutes to check all working properly. This check should be recorded in the log book and any failure reported for maintenance.

### **Annually**

The responsible Elder/Trustee or Property Manager or other designated person is to arrange for an appropriately qualified provider, currently in July by FEM, to carry out the legally required maintenance and service on the following:

- ! Fire alarm system, call points and smoke/heat detection points
- ! Emergency lighting system and lights
- ! All fire fighting equipment

These checks should be recorded in the log book and appropriate certificates filed in maintenance file.

The responsible Elder/Trustee must report on these checks to the quarterly Management meeting of the Elders/Charity Trustees and recorded in the minutes.

## **Section 7 Gas Services and equipment maintenance and inspection**

In addition to the monthly visual checks identified in section 5 the following is to take place in respect of the Gas services and equipment in the church.

### **Annual**

The responsible Elder/Trustee or Property Manager or other designated person is to arrange for an appropriately qualified gas engineer to carry out a service of gas equipment and inspection for gas safety purposes to comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations. This is currently done in November by R Goodwin, RS Gas, Stourport, (01299 827914).

The following equipment is to be serviced and inspected:

- ! Gas Hob in kitchen
- ! Gas Worcester HE Boiler in kitchen
- ! Gas Valiant Boiler in Vestry/Office

The certificate of inspection and service is to be filed in the maintenance file.

The responsible Elder/Trustee must report on these checks to the quarterly Management meeting of the Elders/Charity Trustees and recorded in the minutes.

## **Section 8 Electrical Services and equipment maintenance and inspection**

In addition to the monthly visual checks identified in section 5 the following is to take place in respect of the electrical services and equipment in the church.

### **Annual**

The responsible Elder/Trustee or Property Manager or other designated person is to arrange for PAT testing of portable electrical equipment stored and used on site. This is currently done by FEM in July on a two year rolling programme of equipment as listed in Appendix C.

Outside organisations partnering with the church in activities they manage on the church premises are to ensure that any electrical equipment that they bring on site to use in their activities is PAT tested.

### **5 Yearly**

The responsible Elder/Trustee or Property Manager or other designated person is to arrange for an appropriately trained electrician to carry out a fixed electrical system test and inspection for the church.

This has been done in 2020 and will need to be redone in 2025.

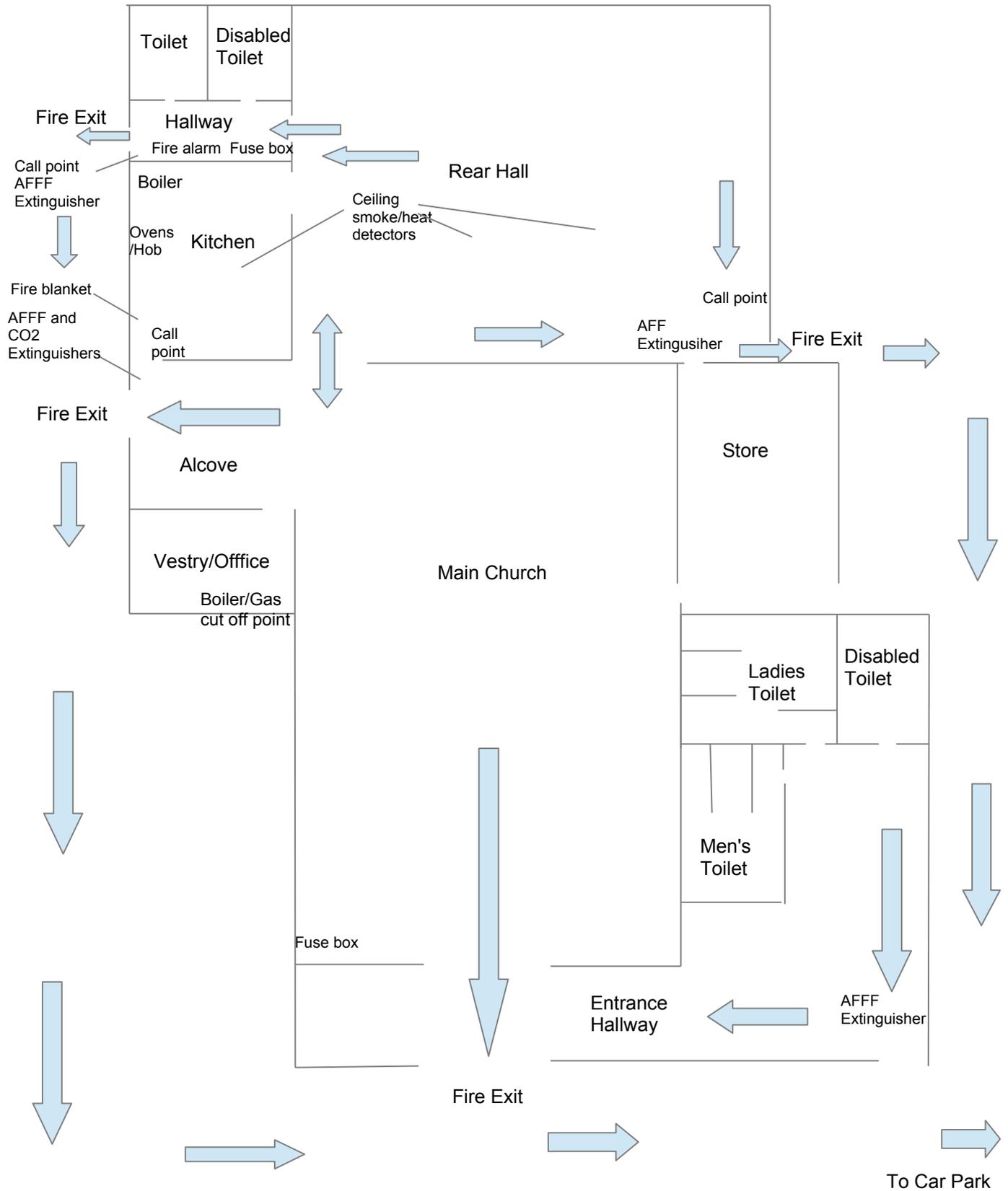
The certificate for the electrical system test is to be filed in the maintenance file.

The responsible Elder/Trustee must report on these checks to the one of the quarterly Management meeting of the Elders/Charity Trustees each year and it is to be recorded in the minutes.

## Appendix A – Current list of activities/meetings and people with responsibility

<b>Charity Trustees Sunday Meetings Prayer Meetings</b>	Philip Hearn, Philip Weber, Kevin Mason
<b>Treasurer</b>	Matthew Carver
<b>Monday Club</b>	Louise Weber, Angharad Hale,
<b>Tuesday Group</b>	Carol Warren, Tony Vickery, Jean Vickery
<b>Dementia Cafe/Singing for the Brain</b>	Carol Warren, Marion Hearn
<b>Welcome Team leader (Sundays)</b>	Jan Darch, Marion Hearn
<b>Sunday Kids' Club</b>	Marion Hearn, Louise Weber, Catherine Mason

**Appendix B – Plan of church  
Kidderminster Evangelical Church  
(not to scale)**



## Appendix C – List of portable electrical equipment used on site requiring PAT Testing

September 2020

Area	Item	
Front Disabled Toilet		
Front Ladies Toilet		
Front Men's Toilet		
Entrance		
Main Hall and Cabinet	Mixing desk Amplifier Tape deck Projector Projector cable Laptop WiFi Router WiFi Relay Extension leads (x2)	
Alcove		
Vestry	Desk lamp Photocopier Smart meter	
Kitchen	Fridge freezer Microwave Coffee Machine (x2) Kettles (x2) Urn Oven (x2) Hoover (in cupboard) Hostess trolley	
Rear Hall		
Rear Toilets		
Rear Toilet Alcove		
Store Room	Electric organ Electric organ lead Hoover (Spare) Sump pump (in cupboard) Hand held heater/dryer (in cupboard) Extension lead x3 Christmas Tree Lights x2 Portable electric radiator	
	Baptistry heater	
	Pastor's Laptop	
	Total 36 items	

## Appendix D – Fire Safety Checklist

**YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS**

### Checks Prior to Meetings (not normally recorded)

#### Escape Routes

Can all fire exits be opened immediately and easily?

Are fire doors clear of obstruction?

Are escape route clear/Side gate unlocked?

#### Fire Warning Systems

Is the main indicator panel showing “normal”?

#### Escape Lighting

Are exit signs in good condition?

#### Fire fighting Equipment

Are all fire extinguishers in place?

Is fire blanket in place in kitchen?

### Weekly Checks

#### Escape Routes

Are fire doors clear of obstruction?

Are all external escape routes clear?

#### Fire Warning Systems

Did the fire alarm work correctly when tested? (one call point tested per week in rotation)

#### Escape Lighting

Are charging indicators visible and illuminated?

#### Fire fighting Equipment

Is all fire fighting equipment in working order? (Visual check)

### Monthly Checks

#### Escape Routes

Are all door seals and intumescent strips in good condition?

Do all internal fire doors close against their rebate / stop?

#### Escape Lighting

Do all luminaries and exit signs work when tested for 5 minutes?

### Annual Checks

#### Escape Routes

Do all fire doors work correctly?

#### Fire Warning Systems

Has the system been checked by a competent person?

#### Escape Lighting

Do all luminaries operate on test for their full duration?

Has the system been checked by a competent person?

#### Fire fighting Equipment

Has all equipment been checked by a competent person?

**Appendix E – Safe Seating Plans**

**(to be completed)**