ST MARY STOKE

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HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

General Statement of Policy

Our policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our employees, volunteers, congregation, visitors and others who may use the church, churchyard or any other building we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) accepts its overall responsibility for this. We ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make have due regard for it. We appoint churchwardens as representatives of the PCC to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation.

We keep health and safety matters under review at appropriate intervals. We monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid. It is the duty of each employee and volunteer to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others; this policy will be brought to their attention. We try to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays their part in its implementation. Further detail about our organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety is set out below.

A copy of this policy is kept in the church and made available to others on request.

Approval

Signed	
Role	Parish Priest / Churchwardens
Date	
Review date	

Responsibilities

Overall Responsibility

Overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the Parish Priest, who will ensure that arrangements and appropriate codes of practice satisfying Health and Safety regulations are in place. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church personnel; as new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list amended as necessary.

The Parish Priest also ensures that:

- The standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained.
- Where necessary, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained.
- Any hazards reported are rectified immediately.
- Only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests.
- Any accidents are investigated, recorded and reported if necessary.
- Relevant health and safety documents and records are retained.
- They keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church.
- They set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

Churchwardens

The Churchwardens have day-to-day responsibility for implementing our policy and ensure that:

- All employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Adequate precautions are taken as set out in this policy and related risk assessments.
- Adequate information and training is provided for those who need it.
- Any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible.
- Where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger.
- All accidents are reported in line with the requirements of this policy.
- Advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy.
- They set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

Employees and Volunteers

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or premises. They ensure that they:

- Read this policy and understand what is required of them.
- Complete their work taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others.
- Comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures.
- Report any hazard, defect or damage, so that it might be dealt with.
- Warn any new employees or volunteers of known hazards.
- Attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely.
- Do not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so.
- Report any accident.
- Do not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Risk Assessment, Training and First Aid

Risk Assessment

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions, and will review and revise these where we suspect they are no longer valid.

Information and Training

We will provide any necessary information and training for our employees and volunteers in a timely manner, and keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors and self-employed people who may need this to complete their work safely.

First Aid

We will provide adequate first aid facilities, including as a minimum a suitably stocked first aid box and a person who will take charge of first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information for employees and volunteers.

Our First Aid Box is located in the vestry. Several members of the congregation are qualified first aiders.

Accident Reporting

We will keep an accident book and record details in it. We will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of certain accidents to employees, volunteers and members of the public, in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

Monitoring

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate, and ensure that any lifting, work or electrical equipment and church utilities are inspected as necessary to remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

Contractors

Where we employ contractors, we make sure that they have their own health and safety policy and public and employers' liability insurance, by asking to see copies of the relevant documents.

Record Keeping

Records of our health and safety risk assessments and other documents are kept in the vestry and the vicarage.

Specific Arrangements

Asbestos

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if present, assess any risk from it. We will implement any plan needed to manage that risk, provide relevant information to others who might need it (for example, building contractors), and keep records of the checks, assessments and plans made.

Church Buildings (including Hall)

We will ensure that the fabric of our buildings is regularly inspected to make sure it is safe and tidy. Defects will be repaired as soon as is practicable, bearing in mind that a faculty may be required. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This includes glazing.

Churchyard (Responsible Authority: Ipswich Borough Council)

We will ensure that boundary walls and gates are kept in good repair. We will have trees inspected by a competent person and any necessary work carried out to make them safe. Headstones, tombs and monuments will be checked regularly to ensure they are properly maintained. As our churchyard is formally closed, we will report any concern to the Local Authority (Ipswich Borough Council).

Construction Work

Where maintenance, refurbishment and restoration work is planned for our church, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts, and determine and comply with any responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations.

Display Screen Equipment

Where our employees and volunteers regularly use computers for continuous periods of an hour or more, we will analyse workstations to identify precautions and implement these as necessary. We will also provide information, training, eye/eyesight tests (on request) and special spectacles if needed.

Electricity

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliance is maintained so as to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made where appropriate.

Equipment

Any work equipment (including hand tools) we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained. Where necessary, some equipment (such as ladders) will be regularly checked to make sure it is safe, and records of any checks kept.

Events

Where we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services and fundraising events, we will identify any additional precautions that are necessary and implement these.

Fire

We will complete a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and respond to a fire. We will record our findings, implement any necessary precautions, and review and revise these where we suspect they are no longer valid.

Heating Systems

We will ensure that any oil or gas heating system is suitably maintained and checked annually by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately, and we will keep records of the checks made.

Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural products. We will ensure that these are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions, taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

Lifting Equipment and Manual Handling

We will ensure that any lifting equipment is properly maintained and thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person. We will avoid the need for lifting or carrying heavy objects as far as possible; where this is not practical, we will make use of lifting aids (such as trolleys) or other precautions, including team lifting.

Preparation of Food

We will ensure that on those occasions when we prepare food, we use a clean and disinfected work surface, utensils and equipment. We will store food, on the rare occasions that we do, in such a way as to avoid contamination, provide hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste.

Slips and Trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled may have in negotiating access. We will make periodic checks to ensure that floors, coverings, steps and pathways remain in good condition, free from obstruction, and that any precautions (such as hand rails or lighting) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks we make, and will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

Working Alone

We will identify circumstances where our employees and volunteers work alone, and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety (see also the Lone Working Policy).

Working at Height

Where possible we will try to avoid the need for work at height. Where this is not practicable, we will ensure that any work is properly planned to identify suitable precautions, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC.