



Risk Assessment Guide for Hirers of the Church

This Risk Assessment Guide has been prepared by the Parochial Church Council for the guidance of Hirers of the Church, to ensure the safety of Hirers, audience members and others who may be affected by, or involved in, your event. Hirers are expected to be aware of any risks inherent in the hire and to keep these risks to a minimum to avoid injury to themselves, their audience and other invitees and members of the public.

The Guide is not intended to be exhaustive and Hirers are expected to check, as far as is reasonable, that the Church is in a safe condition for use before and at the start of the event and to take appropriate measures to reduce any identified risks. In particular it does not cover specific activities undertaken by Hirers, who are expected to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the premises for their own hiring purpose and to undertake their own risk assessment specific to that purpose.

Hirers are reminded that they are required to leave the Church in a safe and clean condition after use.

Hirers should be aware of the risks identified below and the controls in place to minimise these risks. Please note that the precautions identified in this risk assessment form part of the conditions for hire and use of the premises.

Electrical appliances

Risk:

Electric shock from electrical appliances; these are essentially, but not exclusively, associated with the sound system.

Electric shock from Hirers' electrical equipment; eg cables, music systems, amplifiers, projectors and lighting

Risk rating:

Low

Precautions:

Church electrical installations and appliances are regularly inspected and PAT-tested; power circuits are protected by circuit breakers at the fuse board and regularly inspected and tested.

Hirers are required to check their own equipment used in the Church, for safety and signs of cable wear; they must ensure that liquids are kept away from electrical equipment and that trailing wires are kept away from audience circulation areas and/or clearly identified and/or protected.

Audience etc circulation

Risk:

Trips, slips and falls on uneven flooring and grating throughout the Church aisles and circulation areas. Single-step level changes between the main aisle pews.

Risk rating:

Low

Precautions:

It is expected that audience members and others will move carefully from the entrance Vestibule to their seats and that circulation within the Church will be minimal during the event (allowing for interval refreshments etc). Hirers should consider drawing the attention of the audience to these minor hazards during the pre-event briefing (see below).

Sundry minor injuries**Risk:**

Unpredicted minor injuries occurring during the hire.

Risk rating:

Low

Precautions:

First Aid kits are provided in the Vestibule/Narthex and WC. In the event of an accident occurring during the event, Hirers are asked to notify the details to the Parish Administrator as soon as possible after the event (ideally on the next working day) so that it may be entered in the Accident Book.

Fire**Risk:**

Fire; and naked flames.

Risk rating:

Medium

Precautions and pre-performance briefing:

Avoid naked flames; a Fire Risk Assessment is in place for the Church; Hirers should make themselves aware of the location of fire extinguishers and report use of/damage to them to the Parish Administrator on the next working day.

Hirers must be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures and in particular must ensure that all exits from the building are kept clear and unobstructed at all times throughout the period of the hire; the **pre-performance briefing** should identify the fire exits, namely the **main entrance doors**; the **south doors** fastened with quick-release bolts (and Hirers should brief a specific person to be responsible for these; the cross-doors bar should be removed prior to the performance and the responsible person must familiarise with the bolt-release process)) and the **north west door** adjacent to the WC. The doors into the Nave from the Vestibule/Narthex (which open inwards) should be hooked open during the performance. The Vestibule/Narthex exit doors open outwards and need not be kept open during the performance.

In their pre-performance briefing Hirers should identify the Parade car park outside the Vicarage as the assembly point in the event of Fire evacuation.

Hirers must ensure that a strict "No Smoking" rule is enforced in the building and the Church grounds throughout the period of the hire.

Where candles are used as part of the performance (with the specific prior consent of the Vicar or a Churchwarden), Hirers must ensure that they are strictly monitored and that a nearby fire extinguisher is identified for use if necessary; and that such candles are fully extinguished immediately after use.

Broken glass and other litter (eg during interval refreshments)

Risk:

Harm to Hirers, audience, invitees, visitors, members of the public, young children

Risk rating:

Low

Precautions:

Hirers are required to check for and clear up any damage both inside and outside of the Church; a broom, brush, dust pan and black sacks are provided in the Vestibule/Narthex cupboard.

Hirers must take special care to control the use of glassware during hires and to clear away empty glasses regularly during hires; they must ensure that glasses and similar items are not taken outside the Church by members of the audience.

Additional Guidance in respect of Hires including the Gallery; note that the Gallery must not be used unless it is specifically included in the Hire

Fire

Risk:

Fire in the Gallery itself or in the Vestibule/Narthex and or its Ante-Room.

Risk level:

Low

Precautions:

The several precautions listed under the categories below must be strictly observed. Naked flames are strictly prohibited. A Fire Risk Assessment is in place for the Church; Hirers should make themselves aware of the location of fire extinguishers in the Gallery and report use of/damage to them to the Parish Administrator on the next working day.

In the event of fire it is essential that the Gallery is evacuated in a strictly regulated and orderly manner, supervised by the person appointed to marshal the Gallery stairs (see "Gallery stairs" below) before the source of the fire (if it originates within the Gallery) is tackled with a fire extinguisher.

Gallery seating capacity

Risk:

Overcrowding of the Gallery.

Risk level:

Medium

Precautions:

The maximum seating capacity of the Gallery is 84 persons (adults and children), which must not be exceeded. Apart from a designated person appointed by the Hirer, at the top of the Gallery stairs (see below) no persons are permitted to stand in the Gallery during a performance or event.

No children under the age of 14 are permitted to occupy the Gallery except under adult supervision. In such circumstances, at least one supervising adult must be present per 20 unaccompanied children.

Gallery stairs**Risk:**

Trip, slip, fall, crush

Risk level:

Low

Precautions:

A person appointed by the Hirer must be stationed at the top of the Gallery stairs throughout the performance or event, to control access to the staircase. At the end of the performance, or at intervals, and in an emergency, he/she must ensure that audience egress is properly controlled to avoid trip, stumble, fall and crush hazards.

The staircase lighting must remain on at all times while the Gallery is occupied.

Gallery exit through Vestibule Ante-Room**Risk:**

Obstruction of egress

Risk level:

Low

Precautions:

At all times when the Gallery is occupied or otherwise in use during the course of the hire or performance, the egress route from the foot of the Gallery stairs, through the Vestibule/Narthex Ante-Room and the Vestibule/Narthex, to the main Church exit doors must be kept clear of obstructions, as well as gatherings of people; and the door between the Vestibule/Narthex Ante-Room and the Vestibule/Narthex must be secured in an open position.

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Excluded areas

This Guide does not cover the use of the Chancel beyond the Choir, or the Sanctuary, which do not form part of the hire.