



Diocese of Brentwood

Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines: 2026

*Prepared for and on behalf of The Bishop and The Board by
SafetyToolbox Limited.*

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Bishop's Foreword

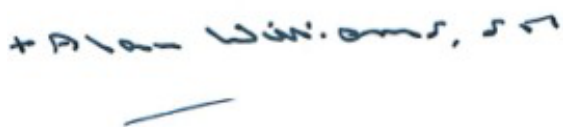
The Church is the community of believers in union with each other. It is not primarily a building but a gathering of Christ's people. All these people and, indeed, the whole of humanity deserve respect, care, kindness and, above all, safety. Keeping each other safe is an essential part of our mission as Church and this applies everywhere within the Diocese and our parishes, whether it be the church building, a hall, offices or a home for priests or other people.

We must be ever mindful of the importance of faith and community and protecting those who are more vulnerable. Accordingly, health, safety and well-being should continue to be at the centre of our thinking.

This Policy document outlines the commitment that I and the Directors of the Corporate Trustee have in matters of health, safety and welfare. It sets out the expectations of the Diocese for all those who work in it, whether a member of the clergy or a paid or other worker, and explains how everyone will be treated with respect, care and kindness. As with Safeguarding, our duty of care in this area is an essential part of what it means to be Church in the Diocese of Brentwood. It is one way in which we can fulfil our Lord's command at the Last Supper to "love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

The health, safety and fire safety arrangements and practices set out in this document are appropriate in the context of the Church and are an essential part of parish administration. If followed diligently, this policy document, along with the resources found within our Online Management System, provides the necessary information that we need to enable us to carry out our roles in the service and protection of others.

I encourage everyone to follow the guidelines set out herein and to embrace the spirit of them as we work together to ensure our Diocese is a place where health, safety and welfare for all working in or visiting our churches and other premises is valued. I thank those who have drawn up this policy and guidelines and those of you who work to manage health and safety in the Diocese.



+Alan Williams, sm
Bishop of Brentwood

July 2026

Introduction

The Diocese of Brentwood ('the Diocese') recognises its legal obligations to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its clergy, paid and other workers and all those affected by the practice of the Catholic Faith within the diocese and our other pastoral and social activities, so far as is reasonably practicable.

This Health and Safety Policy outlines the principles and arrangements by which the Diocese base both their commitment to Health and Safety and their compliance with legislation.

The Diocese is committed to seeking to ensure the development of a positive safety culture by integrating awareness of health and safety requirements into everyday work and faith activities, and management systems. To this end, individual members of The Board of Directors ('The Board'), members of the clergy, paid and other workers and visitors are encouraged and supported to take care of their own health and safety and have due regard for the health and safety of others.

Scope and Purpose

This Health and Safety Policy is designed to meet the requirements of Section 2 (3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and Regulation 5 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

This Policy and associated guidelines apply throughout the Diocese including our premises, activities and the people involved.

This document comprises four sections:

- Section 1 - General Statement of Policy – signed by the Bishop, and confirms The Board's commitment towards Health, Safety and Welfare within the Diocese;
- Section 2 – Roles and Responsibilities – contains details of roles and responsibilities for the management of Health and Safety throughout the Diocese;
- Section 3 - Arrangements to deliver this policy - developed to support this Policy and outlining the broad aims and objectives for managing specific health and safety risks;
- Section 4 – Risk Management and Performance Monitoring and Review – explains the risk management strategy in the Diocese and how we intend to monitor and measure our performance to meet our health and safety goals.

Dignity at Work

In line with the key principles of health and safety, the Diocese recognises that everyone deserves to be treated with kindness, dignity and respect. Accordingly, all individuals who work for the Diocese, whether in a paid or volunteer role are encouraged to:

- Discharge themselves professionally and treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Be open to feedback from others and be open-minded in their responses.

- Nurture a culture that is free from discrimination.
- Feel confident about raising concerns and to challenge inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour they witness.
- In addition, individuals in a management role e.g., parish priests and line managers are encouraged to:
- Lead by example in fostering a culture of dignity and respect; and
- Take timely, relevant action to resolve concerns.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Bullying, harassment or discrimination are unacceptable. Examples of unacceptable behaviours include (but are not limited to):

- Unwelcome physical contact
- Intimidating or threatening behaviour or language
- Unwelcome attention or advances of a sexual nature
- Disparaging, ridiculing or insulting behaviour, language or gestures
- Inappropriate communication or visual display of offensive material
- Isolation, non-cooperation, or deliberately excluding an individual from a work situation (including work-related social events)
- Undermining an individual through unfair work allocation or persistent unjustified criticism.

Reporting Concerns

Individuals who believe they are being subjected to unacceptable behaviour should seek to address this at the earliest possible stage. If the individual feels they are unable to resolve the matter themselves, they should seek advice and support from their Parish Priest or Line Manager.

Where an individual believes the behaviour to which they are being subjected constitutes a criminal offence or an immediate threat to safety, they should report the matter to the Police.

Outcomes

The Diocese takes reports of unacceptable behaviour seriously and is committed to investigating all reports in the spirit of this policy and working with the individuals concerned to achieve an appropriate resolution. Offensive behaviour which relates to sex, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or gender reassignment will be treated as gross misconduct and will usually lead to dismissal.

Refer also to the Employee Handbook as follows: Dignity at Work Policy – Section 2.4. Bullying and Harassment Procedure - Section 6.5

Dissemination and Implementation

For health and safety management to be effective within the Diocese, this policy needs to reflect our aims and objectives, be accessible to all stakeholders and be integrated into everyday working practice.

To achieve this, the Health and Safety Policy will be:

- Signed off by The Board;
- Subject to periodic review by the Health and Safety Sub Committee;
- Made available by the best practical means to clergy, paid and other workers with specific responsibilities detailed in the document; and
- Available to all stakeholders on request (in an appropriate format).

Advice, Information and Guidance

Further advice, information or guidance on health, safety or statutory compliance can be obtained by contacting any of the following:

- Competent Person: SafetyToolbox Ltd Email: support@safetytoolbox.co.uk Website: <https://www.safetytoolbox.co.uk/>
- Health & Safety Coordinator Email: hs@brcdt.org
- Director of Property Email: amandabalicki@brcdt.org
- Property Office Email: property@brcdt.org
- Clergy Welfare Email: vg@brcdt.org
- Human Resources Email: hr@brcdt.org
- Safeguarding Email: safeguarding@brcdt.org
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) **Website:** <http://www.hse.gov.uk>

Section 1 - General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood to secure so far as reasonably practical the health, safety and welfare of all who work for the Diocese either in a paid or voluntary capacity and to protect members of the congregation, visitors and others who may be affected by our activities.

We, the Members of The Board of the Corporate Trustee for the Diocese, seek to:

- Ensure so far as reasonably practicable a safe place and systems of work for paid and other workers to prevent personal injury, work-related ill-health and damage to property.
- Protect our congregations, visitors and other members of the public who may use our offices, parishes and other associated buildings.
- Provide safe plant and equipment, encourage safe handling of hazardous materials and substances and provide adequate safety equipment.
- Ensure a systemic approach to identifying hazards, assessing the risks, determining suitable and sufficient control measures and informing paid and other workers of the correct procedures to maintain a safe environment.
- Inform all clergy, paid and other workers of their personal responsibilities to take due care of the health and safety of themselves, and to avoid endangering other persons by their acts or omissions.
- Ensure that all clergy, paid and other workers are competent to undertake the tasks expected of them and can access appropriate instruction, training and supervision where necessary.
- Consult with clergy, paid and other relevant persons, on matters affecting their health and safety.
- Continually monitor health and safety and, if necessary, revise policies and procedures to ensure health and safety standards are maintained.

All who undertake work for the Diocese are expected to act responsibly to prevent injury or work-related ill-health to themselves and others, and to co-operate with the Diocese in all matters relating to health and safety and the environment.

Signed: Bishop Alan Williams

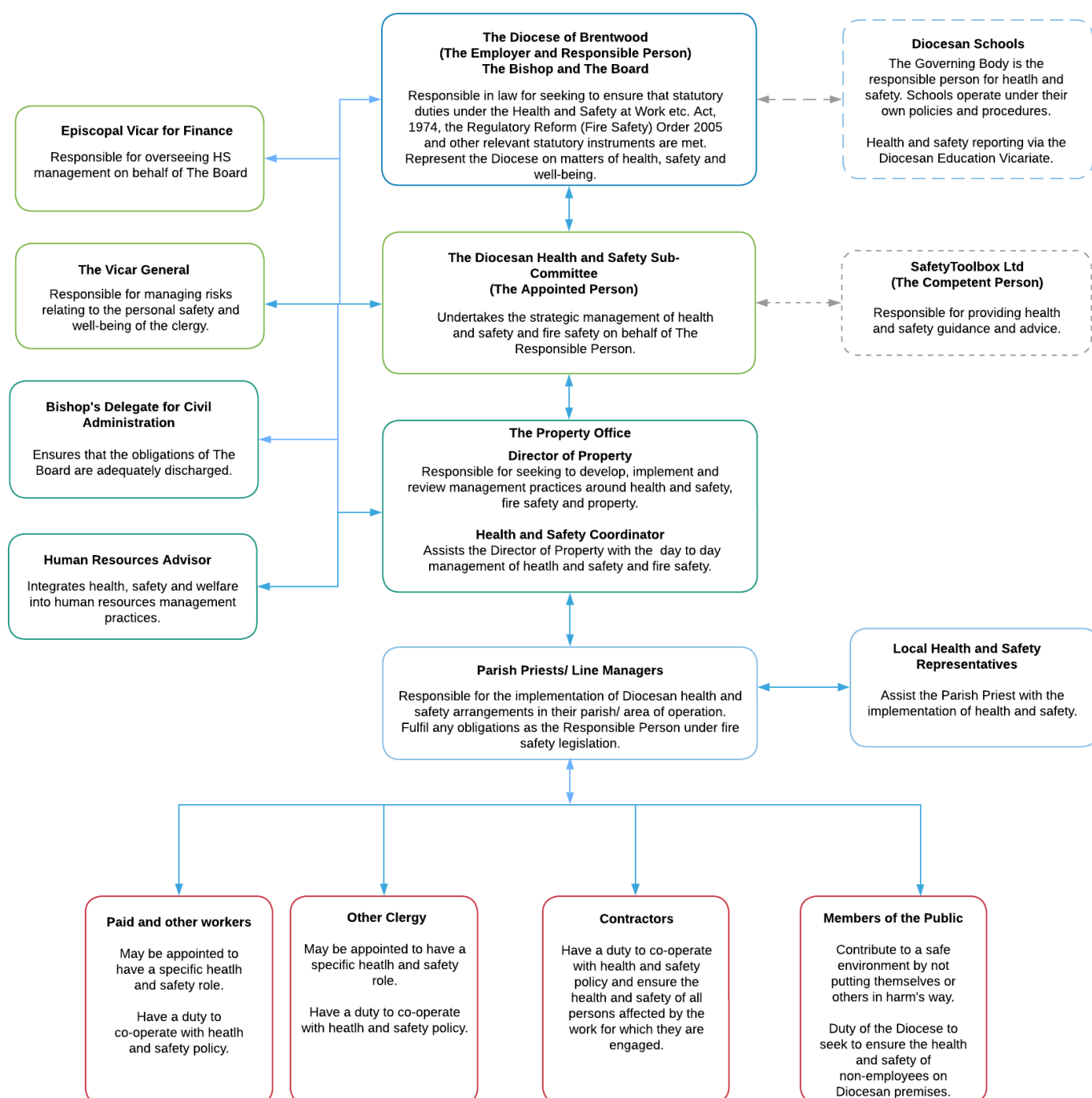
(on behalf of The Board of the Brentwood Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee)

+ Alan Williams, BSc

Date: July 2026

Section 2 - Roles and Responsibility for Health and Safety

Health and Safety Organisational Chart



The Bishop and The Board (The Employer and Responsible Person)

The Bishop and The Board ('The Board') represent the Diocese on health and safety matters and have a general duty of care to protect the health, safety and welfare of paid workers and other people who might be affected by the activities of the Diocese. The Board provides leadership in the provisioning of suitable and sufficient health and safety management arrangements.

The commitment and authority of The Board is summarised in the [General Statement of Policy](#) signed by the Bishop of Brentwood.

To discharge their obligations, The Board seeks to:

- provide a written health and safety policy statement setting out the commitment to health and safety matters in the Diocese;
- provide a clear organisational structure for health and safety within the Diocese to facilitate the implementation of the Health and Safety Statement including the appointment of a Health and Safety Sub-Committee ('Appointed Person'), delegated by The Board to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the hazards associated with the activities of the Diocese are identified through risk assessment and that activities are planned to remove or reduce the risk of injury or loss;
- ensure that health and safety management is adequately resourced, including obligations on The Board as Responsible Person for fire safety management under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005; and
- establish health and safety as a regular agenda item at meetings of The Board to enable them to be kept informed of progress and matters which warrant their attention.

Health and Safety Sub-Committee (The Appointed Person)

The Health and Safety Sub-Committee is the body appointed to the role of Health and Safety Appointed Person.

The Sub-Committee comprises the following and anyone else co-opted from time to time:

- Chair (Board member)
- Director of Property
- Health & Safety Coordinator
- Parish Priest
- Local Health and Safety Representative

This appointment will be made formally at a meeting of The Board.

The Health and Safety Sub-Committee assists and advises The Board in the discharge of their health and safety responsibilities. This includes seeking to:

- ensure that all liability, embracing the statutory and business needs of the Diocese is covered by insurance;
- prepare and maintain a health and safety policy and guidelines;
- establish, monitor and review an appropriate management system for health and safety and fire safety;
- establish and maintain an accurate risk profile for the Diocese and an action plan to manage risk;
- provide a regular report to The Board on health and safety and fire safety matters which warrant their attention.

The Director of Property

The Director of Property is responsible for the activities of the Property Office and has management responsibility for the Health and Safety Coordinator role.

Working with The Board, the Health and Safety Sub-Committee, The Episcopal Vicar for Finance, and the Health and Safety Coordinator, the Director of Property seeks to develop, implement and review a suitable Diocesan Health and Safety and Fire Safety Management System and arrangements which assists The Board to discharge its health and safety obligations.

The Director of Property seeks to provide advice and establish robust property management practices including the development of contractor management practices across the diocese.

The Health and Safety Coordinator

The Health and Safety Coordinator role is discharged by the Director of Property assisted by our Competent Person (SafetyToolbox Ltd).

In addition to the responsibilities associated with membership of the Health and Safety Sub-Committee, the Health and Safety Coordinator is responsible for the following:

- monitoring health and safety performance to identify where additional support may be required to assist Parish Priests/ Line Managers to discharging their health and safety responsibilities.
- Coordinate the completion and ongoing review of fire risk assessments for all relevant premises in the Diocese.
- distributing information, training and advice to Parish Priests/ Line Managers and Local Health and Safety Representatives. Where necessary highlighting the need for additional training or competent input.
- providing a regular report to the HS Sub Committee

- identifying and implementing measures to maintain/ improve adequate health and safety standards.
- reporting serious accidents and incidents to the Health and Safety Executive Incident Contact Centre and coordinating an investigation into the root causes of the accident with the aim to avoid recurrences.

Episcopal Vicar for Finance

Responsible for overseeing the management of health and safety on behalf of The Board. The Episcopal Vicar for Finance works closely with the Property Office.

Vicar General Clergy Welfare

Responsible for the management of risks relating to the personal safety and well-being of the clergy including such matters as working alone, work-related driving and work-related stress. Where appropriate, the Vicar General will liaise with the Director of Property and the Health and Safety Sub-Committee for example, matters relating to buildings and property.

The Bishop's Delegate for Civil Administration

The Bishop's Delegate is responsible for ensuring that the responsibilities of The Board are adequately met. This includes:

- to ensure suitable and sufficient mechanisms are in place to enable the Diocese to be compliant with health and safety and fire safety legislation;
- to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented, monitored, reviewed and revised as required;
- to ensure that adequate resources are available in terms of funds, people, materials, equipment and training to meet the safety needs of the Diocese;
- to develop and maintain opportunities for effective communication and consultation with stakeholders on safety matters are developed and maintained; and
- to ensure that all liability, embracing the statutory and business needs of the Diocese is covered by insurance.

The Bishop's Delegate is assisted in the discharge of these responsibilities by the Director of Property, Parish Priests and Heads of Department.

The Human Resources Advisor

Working with the Health and Safety Coordinator and Director of Property to integrate health, safety and welfare into human resources management practices in the Diocese.

The Competent Person

In addition to SafetyToolbox Ltd (appointed as our Health and Safety Competent Person), external consultants are appointed by The Board to provide competent advice and support on the management and implementation of health and safety, fire safety and other related matters across the Diocese.

Parish Priests/ Line Managers¹

Parish Priests/ Line managers are responsible for implementing this health and safety policy and overseeing health and safety matters on a day-to-day basis within the parish/ department/ service they manage. This responsibility and accountability cannot be delegated to others e.g. the Local Health and Safety Representative.

Responsibilities include to:

- adopt and encourage by example, a culture which facilitates everyone affected by health and safety issues to participate in providing and maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all;
- establish a practical and effective means for people to report health and safety concerns e.g. defective equipment, defective premises communicating these to relevant persons;
- ensure that, where appropriate, safety procedures are in place e.g. lone working, fire procedures etc. Such procedures to be communicated to all relevant persons and to be subject to regular monitoring and review to ensure they remain appropriate and are followed;
- provide paid and other workers with the means to discuss health and safety issues e.g. regular meetings, informal chats;
- implement first aid and accident reporting arrangements in line with Diocesan requirements (See Arrangements Section: Accidents/ Incidents and First Aid);
- assist with the identification, assessment and management of the significant hazards associated with the activities of their parish/ department or service and the regular assessments of these risks;
- discharge their obligations as the Responsible Person for fire safety management under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005.
- manage the appointment of contractors to avoid additional risk to paid and other workers, persons hiring facilities, visitors and members of the public and to the contractor and the contractor's personnel;

¹ And those equivalent to them in law

- ensure that property within their control which is rented, leased or licenced to a third party whether for financial consideration or not, is reported to the Property Office and to cooperate with Diocesan requirements in respect of the management of such property;
- where appropriate, advise the appropriate person of any defect in their workplace of which they become aware in order that action can be taken to maintain a safe workplace;
- assisting with the identification of any information, instruction, supervision and training necessary to improve safety and ensuring that these are delivered to relevant personnel. This includes ensuring that safety induction training is provided to all new starters within their parish/ department or service;
- seek the advice of The Health and Safety Coordinator on health and safety matters of which they are unsure or where they are advised of a need to obtain competent advice; and
- where appropriate, ensure that a copy of the current Employer's Liability insurance is clearly displayed on the premises.

Issues relating to clergy health, safety or welfare should be directed to the Vicar General responsible for clergy welfare or The Bishop.

Additional responsibilities of Parish Priests

In addition to the responsibilities outlined above, Parish Priests should also be aware of the following additional responsibilities to:

- seek to appoint a Local Health and Safety Representative or Representatives to assist with health and safety matters and informing the Health and Safety Coordinator of who those persons are or advise where no such appointment can be made;
- provide the Local Health and Safety Representative(s) with adequate information and where necessary, training to enable them to carry out their role effectively;
- establish health and safety as a regular agenda item on the Parish Finance/ Premises Committee; and
- seek to ensure the Parish SafetyToolbox Online account is kept up to date including:
 - having access to all Profiles (a term used within the Online system to represent a group of tasks which could relate to anything from a Church or other buildings to an activity, event or person), relating to the SafetyToolbox Parish Online account;
 - maintaining an accurate identification of risk by the regular review of online Set Up Questionnaires;
 - maintaining inspection, test and maintenance requirements in line with review

frequencies described on the SafetyToolbox Parish Online account;

- completing and regularly reviewing risk assessments in line with review frequencies described on the SafetyToolbox Parish Online account OR when a significant change occurs impacting the accuracy of the previous assessment e.g. change in occupancy, activities carried out, layout of premises; and
- following up on tasks arising from inspection, test and maintenance and from risk assessment in a timely manner and recording progress to provide an audit trail to completion or closing (via online tasks in the SafetyToolbox Parish Online account).

Local Health and Safety Representative

The role of the Local Health and Safety Representative is to assist the Parish Priest/ Line Manager in the discharge of their health and safety responsibilities. The Parish Priest/ Line Manager retains full responsibility for health and safety in their parish/ department/ service.

The role includes to:

- adopt and encourage by example a positive approach to health and safety and encourage others to do the same;
- familiarise themselves with the role, taking part in training provided by the Diocese and acting at all times within the terms of reference for the role and referring matters of which they are unsure or where directed to seek competent advice to either their Parish Priest/ Line Manager or the Health and Safety Coordinator;
- keep the Parish Priest/ Line Manager informed of health and safety performance by the best practical means e.g. regular meetings and reporting health and safety information such as accidents, incidents, findings of risk assessments including where corrective action is identified;
- assist the Parish Priest/ Line Manager in establishing and communicating procedures to protect people working for or participating in the activities of the parish e.g. paid and other workers, people hiring parish facilities, contractors and members of the public;
- monitor the accident book and coordinating the investigation of minor accidents and incidents to identify root causes and avoid recurrences; and
- ensure serious accidents and potentially serious non-injury incidents are reported to the Health and Safety Coordinator at the earliest opportunity (See Arrangements section: Accidents/ Incidents and First Aid).

NOTE: It is anticipated that Local Health and Safety Representatives, particularly in parishes, are likely to be volunteers. Occasionally they may be paid workers whose role incorporates health and safety responsibilities. Representatives are also likely to have little previous health and safety

knowledge or experience. People who typically fulfil this role are often able to bring professional qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience which supports them in this role. Useful skills and attributes for such a role include:

- a commitment to safety, health and welfare;
- a good working knowledge of the parish/ department/ service, what goes on and how activities are run;
- good communication and organisation skills; and
- basic IT skills and access to a computer or tablet.

Persons appointed as their Local Health and Safety Representative should be aware that, provided they act within the terms of reference outlined above, the Diocesan insurance policy covers them for claims made against them personally as a result of their activities associated with this role. For further information about Diocesan insurance cover please contact the Property Office.

Resources to assist Local Health and safety Representatives are provided by the Diocese in the form of SafetyToolbox Online, access to The Competent Person for specific health and safety advice and face to face forums, seminars or training sessions.

Other Clergy, Paid and Other Workers

All clergy, paid and other workers of the Diocese have a duty to co-operate with the Diocesan Health and Safety Policy Statement including to:

- familiarise themselves with the information contained in the Diocesan Health and Safety Policy and Guidance document;
- understand their responsibilities for health and safety;
- operate within the limits of their competence;
- cooperate with The Board in meeting their statutory health and safety duties;
- take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety;
- report all accidents, dangerous occurrences and ill-health they believe to be related to the work they undertake for the Diocese to their line manager, Parish Priest, Vicar General or Bishop as appropriate;
- understand all emergency procedures applicable to the premises or area in which they are working;
- only use plant and equipment with which they are familiar or if necessary have received training in the use of or for which they have been authorised;

- use all plant and equipment for the purpose intended in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- use and maintain all equipment provided for personal safety in a condition fit for that use and report any defects in a timely manner; and
- report to their Parish Priest/ Line Manager any condition which in their opinion is a danger.

Contractors

Anyone entering Diocesan premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than a member of the clergy, paid worker or volunteer will be regarded as a contractor.

All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- discharge their undertakings in a safe manner, within relevant health and safety and fire safety laws, codes and standards;
- conduct themselves in a manner sympathetic and respectful to the environment in which they are working;
- have their own Health and Safety policy (where required by law) and provide a copy of the same which will be retained by the engaging party;
- produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place and provide a copy which will be retained by the engaging party;
- demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their work competently. This may be by reference to membership of a recognised trade association, references from other customers, evidence of qualifications held etc;
- comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the engaging party or their authorised delegate(s) in providing an environment in which people can safely use the premises in which the work is being carried out whether at work or otherwise;
- not commence work until they have received a safety induction specific to the premises where they are working and given by an authorised person e.g. Parish Priest or his authorised delegate;
- take appropriate precautions to avoid exposure to asbestos;
- not undertake any unauthorised building or maintenance work;
- where plant and machinery are brought onto Diocesan premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation;
- contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the engaging party or their authorised

delegate(s). However, responsibility will remain with the contractors;

- ensure that the risk from fire to occupants, the premises and neighbouring premises are taken into account and appropriate controls incorporated into risk assessments, method statements, work schedules and contract agreements.
- any 'high hazard' work carried out on Diocesan premises must be carried out using a 'permit to work' and managed appropriately. High hazard work includes any hot work, roof work etc; and
- observe the smoking arrangements in force on the premises where they are working. Usually this will require no smoking inside the premises and the disposal of waste smoking materials in a manner appropriate to the prevention of fire.
- ensure that where their undertaking impacts the existing fire safety provisions at the premises, the local Responsible Person is notified.

Individuals or Organisations who Hire Diocesan or Parish Premises

An individual or organisation hiring Diocesan or Parish premises e.g. the Church Hall, whether for a financial consideration or not, must co-operate with the following in addition to any additional terms and conditions imposed by the person in control of the hired premises e.g. the Parish Priest:

- report any accident or unsafe condition of which they become aware during their hire to the person in charge or as instructed within the terms and conditions of hire;
- be aware of the emergency procedures applicable to the premises being hired and have made suitable provisions to implement these. Hirers should undertake their own risk assessments for general usage and fire;
- be aware that the hirer is responsible for any loss or damage caused whilst using Diocesan premises. Private hirers may wish to purchase public indemnity insurance cover to protect against costs incurred in the event of loss or damage. Commercial hirers and contractors providing a service or attraction and engaged by a hirer must ensure they have public indemnity insurance with a minimum limit of indemnity of £5 million. Proof of insurance should be given to the parish before confirmation of hire is signed; and
- in all cases, the hirer must ensure their activities are in sympathy and respectful of the teachings of the Catholic Church and will not cause offence.

Template hire agreements authorised for use in the Diocese of Brentwood are available from the Rental Property section of SafetyToolbox Online or by request from the Property Office.

Governing Bodies of Diocesan Schools

The term 'school' means all Catholic schools and colleges, including schools in the trusteeship of

a religious order. This includes maintained schools, academies in England, independent schools, sixth form colleges and non-maintained special schools.

The Governing Body, whose undertaking is the day to day running of the School, is the duty holder for the purposes of health and safety legislation and must discharge all of its duties as duty holder under all relevant health and safety provisions in their entirety. If any health and safety duties rest or remain with the Trustees, the Trustees nominate and appoint the Governing Body to take all steps necessary to discharge that duty on the Trustees behalf.

Section 3 - Arrangements for health and safety

The following section sets out our arrangements to minimise, as far as is reasonably practicable, risks to the health and safety of members of the clergy, paid and other workers, contractors and members of the public.

These arrangements are designed to demonstrate a level of commitment to managing hazards and risks across our Diocese. The exact way these measures are arranged may vary from one premises to another.

Unless stated to the contrary, statutory and other routine surveys, tests, inspections and checks will be initiated by the person recognised as being in control of the premises or their authorised delegate.

General Arrangements

1. Accidents/ Incidents and First Aid

As a minimum we seek to ensure that a first aid box and a person appointed to take charge of first aid arrangements such as calling an ambulance, is provided in our administrative offices. Staff in these offices will be advised about the first aid arrangements available to them.

Whilst we recognise that it is not a legal requirement that we make provision within our first aid arrangements for persons other than paid workers, we seek to provide first aid equipment in most of our churches and church halls and at other Diocesan services. We rely on the good will of good Samaritans to provide first aid treatment (as appropriate) at our services and other activities.

The persons in control of other Diocesan premises are encouraged to review their first aid arrangements regularly and update these arrangements where appropriate. As a minimum, premises should provide a basic first aid kit containing a selection of simple dressings. Lotions, creams, tablets and other items which could be regarded as a medicine should NOT be included in first aid boxes provided for use by paid or other workers or members of the public.

Definitions

Near Misses

These are unsafe events or situations that could have resulted in an injury, illness or damage but did not due to chance, corrective actions or interventions e.g., someone trips on damaged flooring but does not sustain an injury.

Minor Accidents:

These are accidents resulting in injuries which require no first aid intervention, or first aid provided on site e.g., minor cuts, minor bumps and bruises.

Serious Accidents:

These are accidents resulting in a serious injury which require hospital treatment e.g. fracture, serious burns, laceration requiring stitches.

Serious Non-Injury Incidents

These are incidents that could have resulted in serious injury or damage to property e.g., fire, gas leak, collapse of scaffolding

Accident/ Incident Recording and Reporting

It is our policy to encourage the recording of injury accidents, however minor, which happen to any paid or other worker, member of the clergy, and others affected by the practice of the Catholic Faith within the Diocese and our other pastoral and social activities. We also encourage the recording of potentially serious non-injury incidents.

Wherever possible, details of the accident/ incident should be recorded on an Accident Form, witnesses and photographic evidence collected and the scene preserved until advised by the Health and Safety Coordinator, Director of Property or other authorised person e.g., insurance claims officer, Vicar General. However, the primary concern must always be to ensure any injured persons are safe and receiving any necessary medical assistance and that the premises are made safe to avoid further accidents/ incidents.

All minor accidents and near miss incidents should be recorded in the local accident book. Minor accidents/ incidents should be followed up locally. Serious accidents/ incidents including fires regardless of whether the fire and rescue service are called, **MUST** be reported to the Director of Property or HS Coordinator as soon as possible.

Any accidents involving employees of the Diocese where the injury results in them being absent from work or unable to do their normal work, for three days or more (including weekends, rest days or holidays) should also be reported to HR as soon as possible by telephone: 01277 265253 or email hr@brcdt.org

For out of hours reporting of serious accidents/ incidents please contact Sedgwick Loss Adjustors on 0345 604 8580.

Over three-day incapacitation

Accidents that result in a worker (employee or volunteer worker) being away from their work or unable to perform their normal work duties incapacitated for more than three consecutive days as a result of the injury **MUST** be recorded in the accident book. The HS Coordinator must also be informed as soon as possible.

Over seven-day incapacitation

Accidents that result in a worker being away from their work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven days as a result of the injury **MUST** be reported to the HS Coordinator. The seven day period includes weekends and rest days but does not include the day of the accident. The HS Coordinator is required to make a report to the Health and Safety

Executive within 15 days of the accident.

Once reported, follow up on serious accidents and serious incidents will be coordinated centrally through the Property Office including, where necessary, statutory reporting under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). **These reports are disclosable in the event of a prosecution or personal injury claim and it is essential that they are completed correctly.**

All reported accidents and non-injury incidents should be referred to the Parish Finance/ Premises Committee as part of the regular health and safety report.

Accident Investigation

Minor accidents won't usually require detailed and documented investigation. Anything that is documented in respect of minor accidents must be kept confidential and circulation strictly limited.

Serious accidents need to be investigated more thoroughly and the process **MUST** be coordinated centrally by the Director of Property and/ or HS Coordinator. **Parishes should not prepare or circulate any further paperwork or written communication e.g., email, other than the initial Accident Book entry and notification of the accident to the Director of Property or HS Coordinator.**

The Health and Safety Coordinator/ Director of Property will co-ordinate with the local Health and Safety Representative/ Parish Priest and other relevant parties to ensure a formal investigation of serious accidents/incidents is undertaken to determine the causes and prevent further incidents from occurring.

Instances of ill-health reported in connection with work activities e.g. skin complaints believed to be as a result of using cleaning products at work or back strain from lifting heavy objects should be reported as soon as possible to the Health and Safety Coordinator or HR Advisor who will co-ordinate further action.

Accident investigation reports can be disclosable in the event of prosecution or a personal injury claim. Accordingly, it is essential that they are prepared carefully to protect any personal data contained in the report and to protect legal privilege.

All accident records and associated information will be filed confidentially and retained for at least 3 years.

A flow diagram outlining accident reporting procedures in the Diocese of Brentwood is available in the Appendix. An explanatory guide covering accident reporting procedures in the Diocese and considerations for first aid arrangements is also available in the First Aid and Accident Reporting section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

2. Major Incidents

A major incident is an event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires

special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency.

There are several types of major incidents:

- natural – flood
- hostile - terror threat
- health related - the coronavirus pandemic
- technological - cyber attacks

We are committed to supporting our Diocese and local communities in the event of a major incident, in particular those situations which could increase the risk of long-term ill-health for the good of The Diocese, our clergy, paid and other workers and society in general.

3. Competence

Competence is defined as having the necessary blend of skills, knowledge, experience and aptitude to undertake a task or role. Accordingly, we seek to ensure that our recruitment practices support the engagement of people with appropriate competencies. Where competence gaps are identified, we seek to provide additional training and/or supervision. The level of supervision will be commensurate with the level of risk and consider individual characteristics such as age, experience etc.

We will seek to provide clergy, paid and other workers, contractors and other relevant persons with suitable and sufficient health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision, so far as is reasonably practicable as follows:

- at induction;
- at regular intervals thereafter;
- on transfer or promotion to new duties;
- on introduction of new technology;
- on changes to systems of work; and
- when training needs are identified during risk assessments.

Senior Management will be included in the health and safety training programme.

The Health and Safety Coordinator will assist with the development and implementation of a training programme for the Diocese in consultation with relevant stakeholders e.g. Parish Priests, HR Advisor and Line Managers.

Competence of contractors will be determined by reference to background checks the detail of which will be influenced by the level of risk associated with the work to be undertaken. As a minimum, this should involve checks on professional standing, qualifications and insurance.

4. Consultation

The Diocese is committed to a partnership approach to risk management involving all those who work for it whether members of the clergy, paid or other workers.

We aim to encourage upwards and downwards consultation using existing channels including:

- Senior Management meetings such as The Board and Health and Safety Sub-Committee
- Meetings of the clergy, paid and other workers e.g. Deanery meetings, Parish Finance Committee meetings
- Internal publications
- Notice boards
- Individual conversations

We aim to consult with relevant persons through these channels on matters such as:

- Changes that may substantially affect their health and safety, for example, changes in work procedures, policy etc.
- Arrangements for competent advice and assistance on health and safety matters.
- The provision of information on health and safety and preventative measures.
- The planning and organising of health and safety training.

Locally, parishes and other diocesan services are encouraged to involve those who plan and organise activities in the identification and evaluation of hazards and risks and in the choice of measures to protect the health, safety and well-being of all participants.

Personal Arrangements

1. Children and Young People at Work

For the purposes of this document we define children as those persons under school leaving age (currently 16 years). Young people are defined as those persons over school leaving age but under 18 years.

We recognise that children and young people may be at increased risk in the workplace due to their immaturity, inexperience and lack of risk awareness. We also recognise that persons over 18 years who are new to the world of work may be similarly vulnerable. In all cases, the health, safety and well-being of young workers or inexperienced workers should be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Where young people/children are involved in work experience or are employed, compliance with applicable employment and working hours legislation must be followed.

Consideration of the risks associated with the tasks which the young person/child is to be undertaking, allowing for their immaturity, inexperience and lack of risk awareness must be made.

Where appropriate a person specific risk assessment should be carried out. The individual should be provided with additional instruction and supervision as determined by the findings of the risk assessment.

In the case of employment/work experience of children, the significant findings of risk assessment must be shared with their parent or legal guardian, school or college prior to the placement/work starting.

For more information about Young Workers refer to the Young Workers section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

2. Disability

For the purposes of this document, our definition of disabled is taken from the Equality Act, 2010 where a person has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to carry out normal daily activities.

We recognise that disablement need not be a barrier to contributing to the activities of the Diocese. We are committed to the inclusion of disabled persons and will endeavour to introduce reasonable adjustments to facilitate this where necessary.

In the case of individual clergy, paid and other workers, their needs should be dealt with locally and involve discussion with the individual concerned on a case-by-case basis to facilitate agreement of a practical solution to maintaining their health, safety and well-being and to avoid endangering others who might be affected.

We also recognise that there are occasions when people are temporarily disabled, for example following an accident or illness. Persons suffering temporary disablement should be encouraged to continue to work or participate in the activities of their parish or the Diocese as far as they feel able. Reasonable and practical measures should be taken to accommodate this aim.

In instances of temporary or permanent disablement of clergy, this will be a matter for the Vicar General responsible for clergy welfare.

Where the needs of a disabled employee, volunteer worker or legitimate visitor cannot be adequately met within the adjustments and emergency procedures already in place at a given location, a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) should be prepared in consultation with the individual concerned.

Refer also to the Equal Opportunities section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook.

For general information about issues associated with disability refer to the Disabled Persons section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources. For more information about PEEPs refer to the guide in the Fire section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

3. Lone Workers

The Health and Safety Executive ('HSE') defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.' Lone working may occur when clergy, paid or other workers are working alone in our premises, working in the premises before or after normal hours and when working away from the main work site.

It is our policy to seek to avoid the need for lone working as far as is reasonably practicable. However, we recognise that there are times when it is unavoidable. Line managers and Parish Priests should ensure that safe procedures to minimise the risks to lone workers are established and communicated to those involved, including:

- Not working alone unless authorised to.
- Not undertake any task that might put the worker in harm's way.
- Understand the task and what to do if something goes wrong.
- Establish 'check in' arrangements with someone so the alarm can be raised if necessary.
- Not to work alone if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable about it.

For more information about working alone refer to the Vulnerable Groups section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources

4. Migrant workers

By migrant worker we mean people who have come to the UK in the last five years and are working or other recently arrived workers from overseas. Migrant workers may be at increased risk of harm in the workplace due to:

- Language and communication issues
- Basic competencies such as literacy, numeracy, physical attributes, general health and relevant work experience
- Compatibility with UK professional or vocational qualifications
- Different attitudes and assumptions

We seek to integrate migrant workers into the workplace and equip them with the information, training and supervision necessary to enable them to work safely and effectively. Person centred assessments are carried out where appropriate to identify as far as is reasonably practicable, individual risk factors and develop controls through consultation with the individual worker and their Line Manager.

Refer also to the Equal Opportunities section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook.

For general information on migrant workers, refer to the Vulnerable Groups section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

5. New Starters

We recognise that new starters are likely to be unfamiliar with their workplace and work role. As such they may be at increased risk.

We encourage all those in control of premises to establish an effective means to:

- ensure new appointees are competent to carry out the tasks associated with their employment (whether paid or voluntary);
- where gaps exist to provide additional training and/ or supervision. The level of supervision will be commensurate with the level of risk and consider individual characteristics e.g. age and aptitude; and
- provide new starters with safety critical information such as fire procedures and first aid arrangements within their first day at work (Safety Induction Training).

For details around starting work including the induction process, refer to the 'Working for the Diocese' section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook.

For more information about managing new starters including a checklist for carrying out and recording Safety Induction Training refer to the New Worker section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

6. Older workers

There is no single age where someone becomes an 'older worker.' In our organisation, we believe that as long as an individual is fit and able to do their job safely and efficiently, age is not a justifiable barrier to enabling them to continue to work.

Where appropriate we carry out person centred risk assessments which help to identify factors about an individual's job that may put them at increased risk and discuss with them an appropriate set of measures to mitigate those risks.

Refer also to the Equal Opportunities section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook.

7. Personal Safety (see also Working Alone)

Violence at work is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as 'Any incident in which a person is verbally abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to his or her employment'.

We recognise that our clergy, paid and other workers may be at risk of violence or harassment from members of the public. These persons may be at risk because they are involved in activities such as:

- Working with individuals who have known risks e.g. persons with mental health issues or who are intoxicated.
- Travelling between work locations.

- Carrying equipment, confidential information or involved in the counting or transporting of money.
- Working alone in their workplace or working in someone's home e.g. pastoral visits.

These persons may be physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance.

Persons in control of our premises are encouraged to raise awareness to the hazards and risks to themselves and their paid and other workers and establish practical and proportionate measures to control these hazards and risks. For example, persons at risk should:

- Be competent to undertake their duties safely.
- NOT take unnecessary risks.
- Be aware of the hazards and risks to which they are exposed and the measures to be used to protect them e.g. avoiding working alone late at night, avoiding working in isolated areas, ensuring access to a safe means of escape etc.
- Make sure that their line manager or other responsible person is aware of any medical condition or other personal circumstance which might reasonably impact on their ability to work safely alone or in a high-risk situation.
- Know what to do if something goes wrong.
- Inform a colleague, family member or friend (whichever is appropriate) of their whereabouts, what they are doing and when they should be expected back to their normal workplace or home.
- Report promptly any concerns, threats or potentially dangerous situations to their line manager, Parish Priest, Vicar General or Bishop as appropriate.

Persons who have a responsibility for managing people who are vulnerable to violence and harassment e.g., line managers, Parish Priest etc. must seek to:

- Understand the importance of ensuring the hazards and risks are correctly evaluated.
- Obtain professional advice and assistance where they cannot reasonably manage problems within the limits of their own resources.
- Understand the practical and emotional implications of working alone or in difficult situations.

Clergy experiencing violence and harassment should contact their Dean, Vicar General or Bishop.

The Diocese will seek to identify those activities taking place in our parishes and other Diocesan facilities and evaluate these specifically for the purposes of determining the level of risk posed to those involved and whether there is a need to do more to protect people.

Reducing the risk will primarily depend on establishing guidelines for appropriate working

procedures and providing information and/ or training for those involved.

The design of our premises also influences the risk and where we have the opportunity to redesign premises, we will seek to include improvements to reduce the risk of violence.

We will robustly investigate any incidents of violence and harassment to our personnel to identify the root causes and avoid recurrences.

Management support is available to those who have suffered from verbal abuse or physical assault and it is our policy to involve the Police for a full investigation of any person who assaults our clergy, paid or other workers.

For more details around bullying and harassment refer to the 'Key Principles' section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook.

For more information about managing the health and safety of people who work alone refer to the Vulnerable Groups section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

8. New mothers, expectant mothers and women of childbearing age

We are committed to protecting the health and safety of women of childbearing age including new or expectant mothers, to ensure compliance with the **Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999**. We do not equate pregnancy with ill-health, but we recognise that the potential health and safety implications must be addressed.

Upon receipt of written notification that a paid or other worker is pregnant, Line Managers will ensure that the work tasks carried out by the pregnant worker/ new mother are reviewed in the light of their condition and suitable adjustments made to maintain their health and safety and that of their unborn child. Where there is significant risk, these considerations will be documented in the form of a risk assessment.

Paid workers and other persons affected will be made aware of the results of risk assessments so that new or expectant mothers are not put at risk of injury or ill-health from any foreseeable hazard.

Refer also to the Equal Opportunities and Family Related Leave sections of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook.

For general information about managing the health and safety of pregnant workers refer to Pregnant Workers section of the SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

9. Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

This Diocese is committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in accordance with Diocesan policy and procedures.

We have a Diocesan Safeguarding Board and a Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator who, with the individual Parish Safeguarding Representatives, manage and promote the safeguarding of children, young adults and vulnerable adults within the Diocese.

For more information about managing the health and safety issues around events and activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults refer to the Events and the Youth Activities sections of SafetyToolbox Online Resources and resources on the Diocesan website.

Activity Related Arrangements

1. Display Screen Equipment

For the purposes of this document, we define display screen equipment as a device or equipment that has an alphanumeric or graphic display screen and includes both conventional display screens and those used in emerging technologies such as laptops, touch screens etc.

We recognise that the incorrect use of display screen equipment can impact on the health and well-being of the user. Accordingly, we seek to avoid musculoskeletal and other health problems associated with the use of display screen equipment by:

- raising awareness to the potential causes;
- encouraging the use of adjustable equipment as much as possible;
- encouraging people using such equipment to avoid situations which could cause discomfort; and
- carrying out workstation assessment where appropriate.

We recognise that individual factors influence the way a workstation is set up and encourage users to assess their workstation and report problems in order to seek an individual solution as far as is reasonably practicable to do.

Refer to the 'How we do things' section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook for details on eyesight tests and glasses for employees who habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work.

For more information about display screen equipment refer to the Office section of SafetyToolbox Resources.

2. Driving for Work

We recognise that there are occasions where an individual's work duties necessitate the use of a motor vehicle, for example, members of the clergy undertaking visits to parishioners at home or Diocesan staff carrying out site visits e.g. to inspect planned or ongoing construction or repair work.

For the purposes of this document we define driving for work as that which is required for the individual to carry out their work. We do not mean commuting or choosing to drive where other forms of travel could be used or where the task could be completed another way.

Everyone who uses the public highway has a duty to comply with road traffic legislation, and we

recognise that we have some responsibilities as an employer to take practical and proportionate measures to keep workers involved in this activity safe.

Paid and other workers required to undertake driving activities in pursuit of their work may be asked to provide evidence of their qualification and fitness to drive as well as evidence that the vehicle they use is fit for purpose and road worthy.

We seek to avoid putting drivers under excessive pressure such as might reasonably contribute to a road traffic accident e.g., avoid imposing unrealistic deadlines for completing journeys and not distracting drivers from the road by unnecessary contact with the office i.e. use of mobile phones while driving.

We encourage drivers to join a vehicle roadside assistance scheme whether or not they need to drive as part of their work.

Vehicles must be roadworthy and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Refer to the Employee Handbook (Section 3 How we do things) for details of work-related driving and employees.

Matters relating to work-related driving and the clergy will be dealt with by the Vicar General responsible for clergy welfare.

For general information about driving for work refer to the Driving for Work section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

3. Events

The organisation of events for pastoral, social and fundraising purposes has a long history in our diocese and a very successful role of the life of the Church.

For the purposes of these guidelines, events are defined as activities other than church services, which might involve larger than usual numbers, admission to members of the public or occasional activities such as visits and residential experiences e.g.

- Fundraising events – summer fete, Christmas fair, quiz night, jumble sale etc.
- Processions – organising or attending
- Visits – attending local, national or overseas
- Pilgrimages – organising or attending local, national or overseas
- Residential events – organising or attending
- Exhibitions/ open days

Parish Events

Event organisers MUST prepare a risk assessment for events that fall outside the scope of that which would be considered usual parish activities. This includes, but is not limited to activities such as archery, shooting, climbing walls, weekend festivals, inflatable play equipment, off site trips and overnight stays involving children and vulnerable adults and any event where attendance is likely to exceed more than 1000 people. The risk assessment must be specific to the activity/ event, coordinated by a designated person or team and be regularly reviewed it ensure it remains accurate and up to date.

Event organisers should check with the Health and Safety Coordinator if they are unsure about the requirements for risk assessment and to clarify insurance cover around their planned event.

We encourage event organisers in parishes or organising centrally organised events to use the online Event Manager to assist with their event risk management and contact the Health and Safety Co-ordinator if they require further support or advice.

Inflatable Play Equipment e.g., bouncy castle

This type of equipment has been the cause of catastrophic injury particularly where it has not been adequately anchored down or used outdoors in exposed and windy conditions. Unless there is robust supervision of and control over users, injuries can also arise where users fall off equipment or come into contact with one another. Accordingly, **organisers are strongly discouraged from including inflatable play equipment at events.**

If inflatable play equipment is a feature of your event, you **MUST** make sure that the risk assessment covers its supply, assembly and operation. This is a requirement of the Diocesan insurance cover.

For more information about inflatable play equipment, refer to the dedicated guide on this equipment in the Events section of SafetyToolbox Online and the Health and Safety Executive website at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm>

For general information on running events refer to the Events section of SafetyToolbox Resources

4. Food Safety

We seek to follow good hygiene practice governing the preparation, storage and service of foodstuffs.

We seek to ensure that all food handlers who regularly provide a food service at our administrative offices and other Diocesan Services have access to appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training on safe food handling.

We encourage parishes to assist with the implementation of good hygiene practices among food handlers, providing appropriate information, instruction, supervision and where necessary formal training depending on the nature of the food preparation activity. Other Diocesan facilities are responsible for ensuring they meet their statutory obligations with regard to food hygiene.

We seek to ensure that an appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures.

We do not guarantee that food provided on Diocesan premises for consumption by clergy, paid or other workers or members of the public is suitable for people with food allergies or intolerances. Persons with food allergies or intolerances must make their own judgement based on their understanding of their condition.

Kitchen furniture and equipment should be fit for purpose, kept clean and well maintained.

Persons using kitchen facilities and equipment must ensure they are authorised to do so by the responsible person at the premises e.g. the Parish Priest or his authorised delegate.

For more information about food safety refer to the Food Safety section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

5. Manual Handling

Manual handling is defined as any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force.

We recognise that manual handling operations have the potential to cause musculoskeletal disorder ('MSD') which can lead to long-term ill-health. We are committed to the avoidance of those activities which could increase the risk of long-term ill-health for the good of The Diocese, our clergy, paid and other workers and society in general. Accordingly, we will:

- where possible seek to design out manual handling risks prior to any alteration to our buildings, new activities or the purchase of new equipment; and
- encourage the people in control of our premises to raise awareness to the dangers of manual handling among their personnel and where necessary to carry out an assessment of the hazards and associated risks to establish practical and proportionate measures to minimise their impact.
- encourage individuals to work within their physical limits and seek help if necessary.
- Where appropriate, we will encourage individuals to participate in dedicated manual handling training.

For more information about manual handling refer to the Manual Handling section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

6. Night Shelters

We recognise that night shelters run by parish communities provide a vital service to support those people who find themselves without safe shelter, particularly during the coldest months of the year.

We seek to ensure that parishes providing these essential local services understand the potential hazards and risks and introduce appropriate precautions to protect people directly or indirectly involved where possible seek to design out manual handling risks prior to any alteration to our buildings, new activities or the purchase of new equipment; and

Parishes running or intending to run a night shelter should contact the Health and Safety Coordinator for advice on the relevant insurance and safety implications and complete the Night Shelter Risk Assessment.

For more information on running a night shelter, refer to the Temporary Night Shelter section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

7. Working at Height

Work at height is defined as work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance likely to cause personal injury (for example through a fragile roof).

As far as is reasonably practicable, the person in control of our premises should design tasks to avoid the need to work at height.

Where it is not possible to avoid work at height, an assessment of the hazards and risks should be undertaken and appropriate measures to control these implemented. Control measures should be in line with the hierarchy of control outlined in the **Work at Height Regulations 2005**.

Hierarchy of control measures Work at height Regulations 2005

- Avoid the need to work at height e.g. use extending equipment from ground level.
- Prevent falls using appropriate access equipment e.g. work platforms.
- Reduce the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur.

Persons in control of our premises must seek to ensure that persons engaged in work at height are competent to do so or are supervised by someone who is competent. This is likely to require engaging competent contractors where competence is not available 'in house.' (*see earlier section for definition of competence*)

Persons working by themselves should **NOT** be permitted to carry out work from height.

Ladders, steps and other equipment used for work at height should be secured from unauthorised access and subject to routine checks which should be recorded on the SafetyToolbox Online account.

To find out more about work at height refer to the Work at Height section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

Health Related Arrangements

1. Drugs and Alcohol

We recognise that the use of drugs and alcohol in our society is likely to significantly affect an individual's performance, conduct and relationships.

We are committed to seeking to provide a safe environment for all people who work at or use our premises and participate in our activities and regard the excessive consumption of alcohol and illegal use of drugs to be in conflict with this aim. Accordingly, we require all our clergy, paid and other workers to be free from the effects of alcohol and drugs at work. In some cases, the legitimate use of prescription drugs can affect a person's ability to do their job. Affected persons should inform their line manager.

Refer to the Employee Handbook (Section 3 How we do things) for details of alcohol and drugs in the context of employees.

[Visit the NHS Choices website to find out more about help and support for overcoming addiction.](#)

2. Infection Prevention and Control

Micro-organisms such as bacteria, fungi and viruses occur virtually everywhere in the natural environment. Most of these are harmless to humans. However, some micro-organisms can cause harm either by infection, allergy or being toxic.

Some people are at increased risk of infection from harmful micro-organisms because of the work they do e.g., working with the sick, cleaning and grounds work. Occasionally, there is a threat to the general public as was experienced in the 2002-2004 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak and more recently with the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the time we live with the risk of contracting common respiratory infections such as the common cold and flu and also diarrhoeal disease, taking simple precautions such as good hand hygiene, covering our mouth when we cough and staying at home when we have an infection.

We also seek to identify where the threat from infection is likely to occur and take reasonable steps to minimise the risk for example:

- Assessing the risk from exposure to the bacteria legionella in hot and cold water systems.
- Educating cleaners and gardeners to wear protective gloves when handling rubbish and to be aware of the risk from contact with needles when tidying in the grounds.
- Encouraging handwashing after using the toilet and before handling food.
- Ensuring that hand washing facilities are provided with enough soap and hand drying materials.
- Encouraging at work to cover cuts and abrasions with a suitable dressing.

The control of infection relies on everyone playing their part and, in this Diocese, simple day to day infection control practices are encouraged. We also seek to ensure we are well informed about threats to health which are likely to have a widespread impact and liaise closely with the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales and other relevant agencies to understand

the nature of the threat and the precautions necessary to minimise the risk of infection. Guidance is then communicated to clergy and others in control of our premises and services and additional support put in place as necessary.

Anyone with a concern about infection prevention and control should contact the Health and Safety Coordinator.

For more information about infection control refer to the Hygiene section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

3. Occupational health policy

We seek to protect all our clergy, paid and unpaid personnel from any reasonably foreseeable ill-health effects associated with their work tasks or which might be made worse by work e.g. work-related hearing loss, occupational dermatitis, musculoskeletal disorders ('MSDS').

The Diocese is committed to promoting good physical and mental health including encouraging healthy eating, taking proper breaks, educating vulnerable personnel on the health risks associated with their job and agreeing precautions to manage the risks.

Instances of ill-health believed to be work-related should be reported to your Line Manager who should inform the Health and Safety Co-ordinator and HR Adviser.

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator will co-ordinate further investigation in collaboration with the HR Advisor, the affected person, specialist expertise where appropriate to establish practical and proportionate adjustments that work for the individuals concerned wherever possible.

Refer to the Absence section of the Diocese of Brentwood Employee Handbook for details regarding sickness absence and returning to work.

4. Smoking

In England it is an offence to smoke in workplaces including enclosed or 'substantially' enclosed places to which the public have access. This includes the church, church hall and the priest's house if any part of it is used as a workplace.

Smoking including the use of e-cigarettes is not permitted in work premises including buildings, in Diocesan vehicles and any private vehicle when used on Diocesan business if it is being used to carry passengers.

Where any part of the priest's house is used as a workplace or to receive visitors for work purposes, the same condition applies.

Appropriate signage must be displayed to reinforce no smoking policy.

Visit the [NHS Choices website](https://www.nhs.uk/choices) for help and support for people wanting to give up smoking.

For more information about managing smoking refer to the Smoking section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

5. Mental Well-being and Work-Related Stress

We recognise that mental and physical well-being are of equal importance. Accordingly, we seek to ensure that we take reasonable steps to avoid an individual's job adversely affecting their mental well-being. Where we are made aware of an individual with an existing mental health issue, we also seek to support that individual as far as reasonably practicable.

We seek to:

- Provide support to parish priests and line managers so they are equipped to recognise the signs and possible causes of mental illness and make simple and clear interventions.
- Raise awareness throughout The Diocese of mental health issues and develop a positive culture where clergy, paid and unpaid workers feel they can talk about their concerns.
- Investigate periods of sickness/absence related to mental health or stress issues and agree appropriate interventions with the individual concerned e.g. occupational health referral, flexible working options, temporary adjustments to role and responsibilities etc.

Work-related Stress

The Health and Safety Executive ('HSE') define stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'. These demands can be caused by factors outside the work environment such as high-pressure personal incidents such as bereavement, moving to a new house etc., as well as work-related factors such as unrealistic workload, inadequate instructions and lack of feedback in relation to work output.

Concerns about stress or mental health should be raised through the following routes:

- Paid workers should contact their Line Manager.
- Clergy should contact The Bishop or the Vicar General responsible for clergy welfare.
- Other workers should contact the person within their parish or Diocesan service to whom they report.

You can get advice and support on managing stress from the [NHS Choices website](#)

For general information about working alone refer to the Mental Health section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

Premises Management Arrangements

1. Asbestos

We recognise the potential harm caused by exposure to asbestos fibres and that people should be protected from inhaling them.

The presence of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) does not in itself constitute a danger. However, it is hazardous when disturbed or damaged and must be treated accordingly. Activities which give rise to airborne dust, e.g. abrasion, breaking, sawing, cutting, drilling or machining

ACMs, are most likely to present risks. Accordingly, persons in control of our premises including Parish Priests should ensure the following for all premises constructed or substantially altered/ refurbished before the year 2000:

- Consult with the Property Office who will provide support on the identification of appropriate consultants to undertake relevant surveys, removal or encapsulation works.
- A Management Survey is carried out by a professionally competent person for the identification of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and an Asbestos Management Plan prepared where asbestos is identified. (This will be co-ordinated centrally by/through the Property Office)
- The findings of the survey are implemented in line with the surveyor's recommendations.
- Thereafter, asbestos management plans will be reviewed annually with retained materials subject to a visual check. Initially this will be undertaken by a professionally competent person and coordinated from the Property Office.
- Asbestos records including records of ongoing management to be retained on our online management platform.
- Prior to any invasive works on property built or refurbished prior to the Year 2000, details of asbestos, including the findings of any surveys, subsequent monitoring or removal records, should be communicated to the person undertaking or co-ordinating the work. Where the work warrants further investigation e.g. a Refurbishment and Demolition Survey, this must be carried out by a competent person BEFORE WORK STARTS, the findings communicated to all relevant parties and all necessary measures taken to protect workers and others at risk from exposure.
- Only persons trained to identify and work with ACMs should be permitted to work with asbestos on our premises. These works should be coordinated through the Property Office.

For more information about managing asbestos in premises refer to the Asbestos section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources OR contact the Property Office.

2. Building Structure

We will seek to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all those using our premises whether for work, worship or as visitors are able to do so safely. To facilitate this, a condition inspection may be instructed using a qualified surveyor, as and when circumstances indicate this to be appropriate.

Copies of inspection reports will be retained on SafetyToolbox Online with remedial work implemented in accordance with the surveyor's recommendations.

The success of our arrangements to maintain safe buildings for our clergy, paid and other workers, contractors and members of the public relies on the co-operation of all persons using the premises. Anyone discovering a fault, damage or defect is encouraged to report it.

3. Control of Contractors, Building, Repair and Maintenance Work

Building and maintenance should be properly planned and carried out by persons who are competent and have the relevant skills and experience to undertake the work safely. This includes the safety of those directly involved in the work AND others likely to be exposed to the work such as clergy, paid and other workers, members of the public and contractors.

For the purposes of this document, a contractor is defined as any person who is engaged to undertake work for the Diocese and who is other than a member of the clergy or a paid or other worker. For example, builder/ tradesperson, professional consultant, caterers, event attraction supplier.

We recognise that when contractors are engaged to work on Diocesan premises, we have obligations to avoid their work adversely impacting on the health, safety and well-being of those persons who might reasonably be affected by the work being carried out including our clergy, paid and other workers and members of the public. The contracting organisation also holds similar responsibilities and it is therefore our policy to work together, using carefully selected, competent contractors to ensure that our premises remain safe and avoid risks to health.

Where persons in control of our premises engage contractors then a process should be followed to undertake reasonable checks to establish that the contractor is competent including having appropriate insurance*. This process is facilitated through SafetyToolbox Online.

**NOTE: The diocesan insurer requires that only trained, competent contractors are engaged to undertake dangerous work including work on utilities, work at very high level e.g., roof work and hot works. These contractors must be able to evidence public liability insurance with a minimum limit of liability of £5M. If hot work is involved, the contractor's insurance cover MUST extend to this type of work. For other works, the minimum limit of liability is £1M.*

Persons are encouraged to consult with the Property Office to ensure that all works being planned are being effectively managed. Most contract work falls within the definition of 'construction' and as a client we recognise our responsibilities under the **Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 ('CDM15')**

The CDM Regulations seek to secure construction health and safety through:

- Managing the risks to health and safety by applying the general principles of prevention:
- Avoiding risks where possible;
- Evaluating those risks that cannot be avoided; and
- Putting in place proportionate measures that control them at source.
- Appointing the right people and organisations at the right time.
- Making sure everyone involved has the information, instruction, training and supervision they need to carry out their jobs in a way that secures health and safety.

- Encouraging and facilitating duty holders to co-operate and communicate with each other and co-ordinate their work.
- Consulting workers and engaging with them to promote and develop effective measures to secure health, safety and welfare.

Regulation 4 & 5 of the CDM Regulations define our duties as The Client. Broadly, these duties require that we make suitable arrangements for managing projects and maintaining and reviewing them for their duration so that work is carried out in a way that manages the health and safety risks involved. For projects which involve more than one contractor, we are required to appoint a principal designer and principal contractor and to make sure that they carry out their duties.

We also have obligations to manage contract works under other legislation.

Larger projects, (those which last more than 30 working days and have more than 20 workers working simultaneously at any point in the project or those which exceed 500 person days) will require notification to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Projects of this type will require approval from The Board and in all cases will need to be managed by a Chartered Building Surveyor or Architect. Early discussion with the Property Office is essential to ensure correct protocols are followed including submission of applications to the Property Sub-Committee, application for faculties for work where necessary (e.g. the Historic Churches Committee), authorisation by any other relevant Diocesan committees and that all appointments and notifications required under the CDM Regulations are made in a timely manner and according to the requirements of these regulations.

Persons responsible for planning and coordinating non-notifiable building, repair and maintenance work are directed to guidance and checklists available on our online health and safety management system.

NOTE: The excavation of a grave falls within the scope of the CDM Regulations. Where the Funeral Director appoints the gravedigger, the Funeral Director and gravedigger take on the CDM responsibilities. Where the Parish Priest appoints a gravedigger, CDM responsibilities fall upon the Priest. In this case, the Director of Property or HS Coordinator should be contacted.

For more information about managing contractors and building and maintenance work refer to the Building and Maintenance Work section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources OR the Property Office.

4. Electrical Safety

We recognise that electricity at work covers many areas of operations and can be associated with high-risk conditions.

We seek to ensure that electrical installations on our premises are maintained in a safe condition. Every 5 years, electrical installations on our premises will be tested and inspected by a suitably competent person. Test and inspection reports will be retained on our online health and safety management system with remedial work implemented in accordance with the engineer's

recommendations. Tests and inspections are initiated, and reminders issued via our online health and safety management system.

For the ongoing safety of electrical installations, we will rely on the person responsible for managing the building to be vigilant and respond to faults as they occur.

Only qualified, competent persons with current, Public Liability Insurance cover at the level required by our insurers, should be permitted to undertake work on electrical installations in our premises.

Any temporary electrical installation for which we are directly responsible will be installed, maintained and decommissioned by a suitably competent person.

Where electrical equipment is provided for use by our clergy, paid or other workers or members of the public we seek to ensure that it is fit for purpose and measures implemented to maintain such equipment in a safe condition.

It is recognised that the maintenance of electrical equipment will require the cooperation and vigilance of people using such equipment to report defects and remove faulty equipment from service.

Third party electrical equipment

Electrical equipment may be brought onto our premises by others e.g. by people hiring our church halls, by contractors in the course of instructed works or by paid or other workers in the course of work undertaken for their parish. The expectation is that this equipment will be portable i.e. powered from the fixed wiring installation by means of a plug e.g. powered tools, cleaning equipment or desk top equipment such as a laptop, radio or fan.

People hiring our facilities will be subject to the terms and conditions of hire (see Roles and Responsibilities)

Persons or companies engaged under contract e.g. third party works contractors, consultants will be subject to relevant statutory obligations associated with the work for which they are engaged (see also Roles and Responsibilities)

Paid and other workers should, wherever possible, use equipment provided by their employer. Personal electrical equipment such as mobile phone chargers, laptops or tablets may be brought onto Diocesan property, however, we ask that these items are purchased from reputable retailers and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Personal electrical equipment which is used regularly in pursuit of paid work or volunteering e.g. computer equipment, cleaning equipment or gardening tools should be included in the site arrangements for managing electrical equipment e.g. combined test and inspection of portable appliances.

Personal electrical equipment which falls outside the scope of this policy must be authorised by the Line Manager/ Parish Priest.

For more information about electrical safety refer to the Electrical sections of

SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

5. Hazardous Substances

We recognise that hazardous and dangerous substances may be stored and used on our premises including cleaning substances, glues, paints, sealants and resins.

The activities undertaken on our premises may also generate hazardous or dangerous substances such as during building and maintenance work though not normally by activities undertaken by our clergy, paid or other workers.

We encourage the avoidance of hazardous and dangerous substances as far as is reasonably practicable, encouraging the substitution of hazardous substances with those which are non-hazardous or less hazardous. Where this is not possible, the risk to users, the environment and other people likely to be at risk should be minimised by the undertaking of a thorough assessment of the hazards and risks and the implementation of suitable and sufficient control measures to reduce these.

For more information about hazardous substances refer to the Harmful Substances section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

6. Heating Equipment

Heating equipment should be checked and maintained regularly by a competent person with current Public Liability Insurance cover at the level required by our insurers, e.g. Gas Safety registered engineer for gas equipment. Records of checks and maintenance work should be kept on file and a copy of the annual gas safety certificate or equivalent where other forms of heating apply be retained on the online health and safety management system. Any remedial work identified will be implemented according to the recommendations of the engineer.

Portable heating equipment should be avoided where possible. Where portable heating equipment is necessary it should be selected to be fit for purpose, be well managed to avoid fires and trip hazards and be well maintained.

Persons in control of our premises are encouraged to establish emergency procedures for heating appliances e.g. suspected gas leaks, oil leaks and to communicate such procedures to relevant persons.

Measures to protect personnel from the effects of exposure to carbon monoxide gas should be implemented where appropriate. This will usually involve the installation of a carbon monoxide gas alarm installed near the gas appliance or in rooms containing a solid fuel fire.

Surfaces which become hot such that a burn or scald could be sustained should be protected by a suitable guard to avoid direct contact.

For more information about heating equipment refer to the Heating Equipment section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

7. Landlord Obligations

We recognise our obligations as landlord and accordingly seek to ensure that:

- domestic property including e.g. presbytery or retired clergy house, is provided and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 and where appropriate the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005;
- a Managing Agent must be appointed to manage all residential property rentals. An appropriate appointment agreement must be put in place with the Managing Agent.
- property which is rented or leased to third parties is covered by a legally binding agreement.
- deposits taken in respect of property rental are appropriately managed;
- tenants/ lessees are provided with relevant information about the property e.g. safety procedures, instruction manuals; and
- suitable management of defects.

Parish Priests must inform the Property Office of all Parish property which is rented/ leased out to third parties and maintain the online profile for the property,

It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest to ensure their landlord's obligations are discharged in line with any published Diocesan policy and procedures.

For more information about landlord obligations refer to the Renting Diocesan Property section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

8. Legionnaires' Disease

The Diocese recognises the risk presented by the growth of legionella bacteria in water systems in accordance with the HSE's 'Approved Code of Practice (L8) (ACOP) – Legionnaires' Disease: The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems' and is committed to taking reasonable and practical steps to manage these risks.

In general, the risk of infection from exposure to legionella bacteria in our churches and church halls is not considered to be significant and should be capable of being adequately controlled by:

- Engaging competent persons to undertake work on hot and cold-water systems
- Seeking to ensure safe water temperatures are maintained whilst at the same time avoiding conditions which increase the risk of burns from very hot water; AND
- Seeking to ensure that hot and cold-water systems are turned over regularly.

In premises where the risk may be increased e.g. residential property, an appropriate assessment of the risk will be carried out and action identified to remove/ reduce any unacceptable risk in accordance recognised best practice.

For more information about Legionella refer to the Legionella section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

9. Licensed Premises

Where necessary, we will seek to ensure that premises are appropriately licensed, and the activities carried out are in line with licensing conditions.

It is the responsibility of the licensee to implement the licensing conditions including ensuring the licence summary is clearly displayed and other pages of the licence are readily accessible on site if requested by the authorities.

Where a personal licence is relevant, a Designated Premises Supervisor must be appointed and personally licensed to sell alcohol, or a Management Committee appointed.

Persons responsible for licensed premises should ensure that they have assessed the following risks in addition to general health and safety risks applicable to the premises:

- Lone working
- Violence and harassment
- Security (property and cash)
- Food safety
- Fire

Where a pressurised drink dispensing system is installed, the following factors apply:

- The system must be subject to a written scheme of examination and periodic inspection
- The system must be subject to routine maintenance
- Drinks lines must be cleaned regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's/ supplier's recommendations
- Persons involved in use, inspection or maintenance of the system are trained and authorised to do so
- Records are kept to evidence good management

For more information about licensed premises, refer to the Licensed Premises section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

10. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment

Lifting equipment must be purchased according to a process which seeks to ensure equipment is fit for purpose and complies with appropriate standards.

All persons involved in lifting operations must be competent and, where appropriate, qualified for the task and authorised to operate the plant and equipment involved.

Lifting equipment must be maintained according to the provisions of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment 1998 (PUWER) and where appropriate the provisions of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). A separate safety inspection is usually required

in addition to routine service and remedial maintenance.

These inspections are arranged through a diocese group scheme and further information can be obtained from the Property Office if required.

All lifting operations must be planned, supervised and assessed for risk.

For more information about lifting operations and lifting equipment refer to the Lifting Equipment section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources. Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPS) are covered in the Work at Height section of Resources.

11. Lightning Protection

Lightning strike poses a rare but real risk of serious harm to people and property. There are established standards in place for mitigating this risk, currently set out in BS62305 (a wider standard than BS6651 withdrawn in 2008).

Many of our church buildings already have some form of lightning protection. Where this is the case, this should be subject to test and inspection by a lightning protection specialist every 11 months, in line with the current standard. The Diocese currently offer lightning protection test and inspection as part of the centrally managed statutory maintenance scheme.

Most large and many medium size church buildings are likely to need some form of lightning protection. Accordingly, any such buildings that are new or undergoing substantial alteration or that do not have any lightning protection should be considered for a risk assessment conducted by a lightning protection specialist, familiar with ecclesiastical/ heritage buildings and in accordance with BS62305.

For more information about lightning protection, refer to the Lightning section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources. For details of the centrally managed statutory maintenance scheme, contact the Property Department.

12. Personal Protective Equipment ('PPE')

Personal protective equipment is defined as equipment that will protect the user against health and safety risks. It can include items such as safety glasses, head protection, high visibility clothing, safety footwear, gloves and safety harnesses.

Taking account of what we know about our normal day to day activities, the activities likely to necessitate our clergy, paid or other workers to use PPE is mainly restricted to cleaning and maintenance tasks. The type of PPE required tends to be limited to simple items such as gloves, glasses, footwear, high visibility clothing and ear defenders.

We encourage the person in control of our premises to be aware of the activities being undertaken in and around the premises for which they are responsible and to provide suitable and sufficient PPE where there is no reasonable alternative in order to protect persons from exposure to a hazard.

Such equipment must be provided at no charge to those needing to use it.

No person should be asked to undertake a task for which they are not competent and should highlight the limits of their competence for the removal of doubt.

Where PPE is used for the protection of exposure to a hazard, persons needing to use the equipment should be familiar with the purpose of the equipment and understand how to correctly use, store, maintain and replace the equipment.

For more information on PPE refer to the PPE section in SafetyToolbox Online Resources

13. Safe Access, Egress and Workplace

We will endeavour so far as is reasonably practicable to provide safe access, egress and a safe place of work for all those working at our premises.

Some of our activities take place in areas to which the public have access. We therefore take account of risks to the public within our risk assessments including the risks to children and people with disabilities.

We will encourage those in control of our premises to undertake regular inspections to identify hazards which might affect people working in, visiting or passing by our premises. Where hazards cannot be immediately rectified, we encourage those in control to put in place effective and appropriate measures to warn people of the dangers and protect them from such dangers.

Where the activities or undertakings conducted in our premises result in the temporary obstruction of fire exits and escape routes and affect the functioning of safety critical systems and equipment such as fire alarms and fire extinguishers, we encourage those in control to take account of this and make alternative arrangements to maintain a safe environment for their personnel and members of the public.

For the duration of building and maintenance work, when the building is in use, appropriate risk control measures should be implemented such as barriers and signs. Persons in control of our premises should be alert to building users who may have special needs or be too young to comprehend warning signs and instructions.

Safety equipment will be provided to assist people in an emergency including fire extinguishing equipment.

Warning signs and signals will be provided to warn personnel and other users of our premises of hazards to which they might reasonably be exposed. Persons in control of our premises are encouraged to identify these hazards through risk assessment. Signs and signals should be deployed appropriately in accordance with statutory requirements and best practice.

Cemeteries, memorial gardens and graveyards

These areas by their nature and vulnerable to slip, trip and other access/egress hazards e.g., loose memorials, broken tree branches. Accordingly, regular monitoring of external hazards, should extend to these areas where applicable, including regular monitoring of memorials. A prioritised memorial management plan should be established with larger memorials (more than 1.5m) inspected by a qualified person or a memorial Mason.

For more information on matters relating to safe access to, movement around and egress from premises refer to the Safe Access and Egress section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

14. Safe Environment and Welfare Facilities

We will seek to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable that we provide a safe environment and suitable and sufficient welfare facilities for those working at our premises e.g. toilets, washing and kitchen facilities.

The comfort of our staff, whether they are paid or not, is a high priority. Persons in control of our premises are encouraged to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure a good standard of thermal comfort, adequate ventilation and sufficient lighting. This will be achieved by providing:

- a means of heating our premises which is appropriate to the nature and use of the premises;
- windows which can be opened;
- portable fans where necessary;
- lighting which is suitable for the tasks undertaken; and
- where required, emergency lighting which lights escape routes and high hazard areas in the event of failure of the normal lighting circuit.

All equipment provided for the purpose of workplace comfort should be subject to periodic checks, maintenance and repairs by competent engineers. Certain checks should be recorded, and copies kept on our online health and safety management system.

To find out more information on safe environment and welfare facilities refer to the Office section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

15. Safety of Plant and Equipment

We recognise the importance of providing plant and equipment which is fit for purpose, well designed to minimise risk to users and well maintained. Accordingly, we encourage those persons in control of our premises to establish purchasing policies and maintenance regimes which meet these standards and introduce appropriate measures to assist people using plant or equipment in understanding how to do so correctly.

People using complex machinery or equipment in our premises should be trained to do so including being familiar with emergency procedures. Effective measures **MUST** be established to avoid untrained persons operating complex or dangerous machinery or equipment e.g. equipment locked away.

For more information refer to the Work Equipment section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

16. Slips Trips and Falls

We seek to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all floor or ground surfaces are fit for purpose and maintained to minimise the risk of slips and trips.

We encourage the regular review of Diocesan / parish premises for any slip, trip and fall hazards and for those in control of our premises to take appropriate remedial action to resolve any issues identified.

The prevention of slip and trip accidents on our premises relies on the involvement of all personnel and everyone is encouraged to deal with hazards when noticed. Personnel are reminded of the importance of storing equipment in designated locations and keeping walkways free from obstructions and trailing cables. They are also encouraged to report hazards, seeking assistance with any which they cannot easily and safely resolve themselves.

Storage areas should be of enough capacity, well managed and under the control of an identified person.

Cleaning regimes should be designed to control the build-up of dust, grease and other slip hazards, with all hard flooring cleaned regularly. If there is a spillage, local personnel are encouraged to ensure that it is cleaned up promptly and any wet floor is clearly highlighted.

Except in cases of necessity, wet floor cleaning should be restricted to times outside normal operating hours. Suitable warning should be given where floors remain wet after cleaning or as a result of other causes such as wet weather e.g. wet floor signs, positioning of personnel to provide warning etc.

Waste should be removed regularly to ensure that it does not accumulate and cause a trip hazard.

Personnel are encouraged to wear sensible footwear on our premises taking account of the activity in which they are involved, the conditions etc.

Persons in control of our premises are encouraged to establish local arrangements for dealing with adverse weather conditions i.e. ice, snow, and the accumulation of leaves on a timely basis to reduce the slipping risk in external areas.

For more information about managing slip and trip hazards refer to the Safe Access and Egress section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

17. Unoccupied Buildings Policy

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, we use our insurer's definition of an unoccupied building as follows:

Any building which has not been occupied by the Insured and/or their tenants for business or residential purposes on at least a weekly basis for more than 90 days.

For the purposes of this definition a Building will be deemed to be unoccupied where:

- a) a Building is visited solely for the purposes of checking or inspecting it;*
- b) only part of a Building is used and/or occupied on a regular basis;*
- c) a Building is occupied by a resident caretaker or building guardian or protected by 24-hour on-site security;*
- d) a vacant Building adjoins another Building owned and occupied by the Insured.*

Unoccupied Buildings will not be deemed to include:

- a) Schools or other Premises closed during usual holiday periods or usual seasonal closures;*
- b) Buildings undergoing works as part of a JCT contract or similar until practical completion.*

Where the definition states that buildings will be deemed to be “unoccupied” where only part of a building is used and/or occupied on a regular basis. For example, if only the toilets in a building are used on a weekly basis or a room within the building is only used for storage, then the building would not be considered to be occupied.

In the Diocese, we seek to ensure that the health and safety and fire safety risks associated with unoccupied buildings are identified and managed to limit the risk of harm to both lawful (e.g., contractors, parish staff,) and unlawful visitors (e.g., intruders, vandals, curious children) and the risk of damage to the building (e.g., from fire, vandalism, theft, general deterioration.)

Accordingly, buildings falling within the scope of the definition of an unoccupied building must be notified to the Property Department. The Property Department will notify the insurer of the change in status and reflect this change on the SafetyToolbox Online profile for the building. A new set up checklist should be completed by the parish/ building manager, to identify the relevant maintenance and monitoring tasks required for the building for the time it remains unoccupied.

For more information about managing unoccupied buildings refer to the Unoccupied Buildings section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

Section 4 – Fire Safety Policy

Introduction

Fire has a unique capacity to threaten life, damage property, harm the environment and compromise our mission. Accordingly, we are committed to taking reasonable and necessary measures to prevent fire and protect life safety in the event of fire in the context of the activities of the Diocese.

The Board as well as those in control of our premises have legal obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO) and other relevant legislation.

The FSO applies to our non-domestic properties and some domestic premises where there are common parts, substantial mixed use and where the property includes 2 or more domestic premises units e.g., buildings converted into flats.

The Responsible Person

The Board of Trustees are the Responsible Person for fire safety in the context of the FSO in relation to a workplace, as the employer to the extent that such workplace is under their control. Parish priests or other nominated persons in control of premises are the Local Responsible Person for the premises under their control.

Duties of the Local Responsible Person

- Carry out a fire risk assessment and keep it up to date (see Competence below)
- Implement reasonable and necessary measures to:
 - Control fire hazards and reduce the spread of fire.
 - Provide adequate means of escape.
 - Provide means of fighting fires.
 - Provide adequate means of warning occupants in case of fire.
- Develop procedures in the event of fire, train such procedures to key personnel e.g. clergy, employees and volunteer workers and communicate such procedures to other relevant persons e.g. contractors, people hiring our premises and members of the public. (See Emergency procedures below)
- Where the premises are occupied by third party duty holders e.g. part of the premises is leased or licensed to another employer, contractors, ensure that there is adequate co-operation and communication to maintain fire safety standards for all occupants.
- Undertake regular fire safety checks, maintain installed fire safety systems/ equipment and keep records to demonstrate compliance.

Emergency procedures

Emergency procedures must be specific to the building to be evacuated in the event of fire. This means giving due consideration to the relevant factors including but not limited to:

- The number of occupants
- Vulnerable occupants e.g. disabled occupants, people unfamiliar with the building, people who are alone in the building or in a remote location, people who are asleep.
- Separated family groups
- Occupants on a balcony or gallery
- The available means of escape e.g. number, location and size of fire exit doors, inward opening doors, fire exit doors fitted with locks which require unlocking

Outline emergency fire procedure:

If you discover a fire:

Raise the alarm according to the specific arrangements in your premises e.g. shout FIRE, activate the nearest fire alarm call point etc.

Remember to warn occupants of neighbouring building(s) who are likely to be at risk if the fire spreads

Call the fire brigade by dialling 999 from the nearest available telephone. If this is a mobile phone give the full postal address of the premises and, if asked, confirm that there is evidence of fire (e.g., smell or sight of smoke and flames).

Clear the building and switch off any plant or equipment which might make the fire worse e.g., cooking equipment, ventilation equipment but without taking personal risk

Only attack the fire if you have been trained to do so using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk.

Evacuate the building by the nearest available exit to the fire assembly point which will be a place where people will be safe from the fire

Try to close all doors and windows behind you as you leave, without taking personal risk

DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS.

AWAIT THE FIRE BRIGADE AND DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

Additional emergency fire procedures may need to be developed to account for specific risks or where occupants cannot easily be accommodated into the general emergency procedures e.g. personal emergency evacuation procedures (PEEPs) for disabled occupants. Refer to the guide on PEEPs in the Fire section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

Emergency fire procedures for the church, parish hall and presbytery should be created using the SafetyToolbox Online Accidents and Emergencies Church Site Checklist which is available from the church online profile. Any queries or concerns regarding your emergency procedures should be directed to the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Emergency fire procedures should be clearly displayed in each building. As a minimum this should be on fire exits and at fire points (location of fire extinguishers and fire alarm break glass call points). Industry standard notices can be purchased from safety signage suppliers.

Fire incidents

Small fires which did not require attendance by the fire and rescue service should be recorded locally and must be reported to the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Fire incidents which involved attendance by the fire and rescue service must be reported to the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Enforcement Activity

The Local Authority Fire Officer may visit Diocesan premises for a number of reasons such as:

- following a fire incident ;
- a routine compliance visit; or
- as a result of a complaint or concern from a third party e.g. member of the public

Any visits by the Fire Officer must be reported to the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Competence

The Department of Communities and Local Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment guidance defines competence as:

"A person with enough training and experience, knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to assist in undertaking the preventative and protective measures."

Professionally competent fire risk assessors have been centrally appointed to undertake fire risk assessments where applicable following a fire risk assessment programme ratified by The Board. Fire risk assessments should NOT be completed in house or by locally appointed external fire risk assessors unless this has been authorised by the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Fire Risk Assessment Programme

The fire risk assessment programme follows a five year cycle (unless a material change occurs e.g., alteration to the layout of the premises, change of use). Material changes MUST be notified to the Health and Safety Coordinator.

Year 1 – Initial fire risk assessment completed by an authorised diocesan fire risk assessors.

Year 2-4 – The local Responsible Person usually undertakes a review of the fire risk assessment and ensures follow up action has been progressed in line with the recommendations of the fire risk assessor. Where there is a cause for concern e.g., follow up action cannot be confirmed to have been implemented or the last risk rating for the premises was substantial or intolerable, the authorised diocesan fire risk assessor may be involved in the annual review process.

Year 5 – The fire risk assessment is reviewed by an authorised diocesan fire risk assessor.

NOTE: Action requiring substantial financial investment should be discussed with the Diocesan HS Coordinator who will coordinate support and assist with the identification of cost effective solutions in the wider context of the premises.

Central oversight of the fire risk assessment programme is provided by the Diocesan HS Coordinator to ensure that risk assessments are carried out, that follow up action is addressed appropriately and reviews are completed. Records are kept on SafetyToolbox Online and progress reported to the Diocesan HS Committee.

The HS Committee report to The Board summarising health and safety and fire safety performance and escalating any serious incidents/ concerns.

Information and Training

Relevant safety induction training, which includes emergency fire procedures, should be provided to all clergy, paid or volunteer workers, hirers/ licensees, contractors, and visitors.

Training to support the local Responsible Person and those who assist them in the discharge of their fire safety duties will be provided and repeated as necessary. Local Responsible Persons, or a nominated representative, are expected to attend such training.

The local Responsible Person may identify and arrange additional fire safety training where they consider this necessary.

Fire safety guidance is available via the SafetyToolbox Online Resource Library and competent advice is available via the Diocesan HS Coordinator.

Section 5 – Risk Management and Performance Measurement

This section explains our approach to risk management and how we monitor, measure, review and revise our health and safety management arrangements.

Risk Identification

We recognise our legal duty to identify the significant hazards associated with our activities and to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed by such hazards to eliminate or reduce the risk of injury, ill-health or loss.

We will agree a general risk profile covering the activities of the Diocese. This will be based on:

- Statutory requirements, codes of practice and standards relevant to our activities.
- Accident, illness and claims data within the Diocese of Brentwood and the Catholic Church nationally.
- Data uploaded to our HS management system, SafetyToolbox Online.

This risk profile will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains accurate.

We recognise that within our general risk profile there will be some local variation. Parishes and other Diocesan Services will be able to identify their own risk profile using the Set-Up Questionnaires contained on our online health and safety management system.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a systematic process by which the potential risks that may be involved in an activity or undertaking are evaluated. When considering risk assessment be aware that:

- A hazard is anything which has the potential to cause harm, such as electricity, working from a ladder, using a cleaning chemical etc.
- A risk is a combination of the likelihood that a hazard will result in harm, loss or damage and the potential severity of the consequences. For example, failing to take steps to warn people about a wet floor could result in a slip and fall. If the wet floor is on a busy main entrance the likelihood of an accident is probable. If the entrance is used by elderly and frail people, the severity of the harm as a result of a fall is likely to be serious.

We follow an approach to risk assessment based on the Health and Safety Executive five steps:

1. Identify the hazards.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.
4. Record the significant findings.

5. Review and update.

The significant findings of risk assessments should be communicated to relevant persons in the form of safe procedures, for example, lone working procedure, emergency fire procedure etc.

Risk Management

Persons with specific responsibilities for health and safety e.g. Parish Priests/ Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are carried out, regularly reviewed and updated.

Copies of certain risk assessments will be kept on our online health and safety management system.

We recognise that most of the personnel on whom we rely to manage risk in our premises (clergy, paid and other workers) are not trained health and safety professionals, nor do we believe it is necessarily essential for them to be so. We are committed to providing resources to assist people unfamiliar with risk assessment to undertake thorough and meaningful assessments through our online health and safety management system. For many assessments commonly required for the activities and undertakings of the Diocese, the system provides online interactive risk assessment questionnaires designed to help people with little health and safety knowledge. There are mechanisms within the system and our health and safety management arrangements to seek professional input where required.

Clergy Risk Management

The Bishop and Vicar General are responsible for clergy welfare and will regularly review the arrangements in the Diocese for the management of risks relating to the personal safety and well-being of the clergy including such matters as working alone, work-related driving and work-related stress.

For more information about risk management refer to the Risk Assessment section of SafetyToolbox Online Resources.

Measuring Performance

We are committed to regularly monitoring, reviewing and continually improving health and safety performance in this Diocese. To do this we seek to:

- identify health and safety goals for the Diocese which are specific, achievable, realistic and timely;
- we will use these goals to establish a health and safety action plan which we will use to measure our performance on an annual basis; and
- arrange for our health and safety performance to be independently reviewed from time to time.

In addition:

- The Health and Safety Coordinator will monitor health and safety performance and make a

regular report to the Health and Safety Sub Committee.

- The Health and Safety Sub Committee will meet regularly to review health and safety performance.
- The Health and Safety Sub Committee will communicate any serious health and safety matters to The Board at their regular Board Meeting. In addition, a periodic report on health and safety performance will be presented to The Board.
- Local Health and Safety Representatives will monitor health and safety performance and report regularly to the Parish Priests/ Line Manager. In parishes this report should be made via the Parish Finance or Premises Committee.
- Line managers should monitor health and safety performance within the scope of their area of operation and report any concerns to the Health and Safety Coordinator.
- Where deficiencies in health and safety performance are noted, we will consult with all relevant parties to implement a practical and sustainable resolution as quickly as possible.

Health and Safety Audit

A process of periodic review will be developed to establish that our health and safety management system remains fit for purpose and that records retained to demonstrate compliance are accurate and of good quality.

Record of Amendments

Revision	Date	Amendment
V2	07/21	Amends following annual policy review. Significant amends to HS Coordinator role; accidents and first aid, asbestos, work at height. Inclusion of Governing bodies of Diocesan Schools in roles and responsibilities. Inclusion of new policies – major incidents, migrant workers, older workers. Various stylistic and linguistic adjustments.

V3	07/22	Amends to remove specific reference to COVID-19 and replace with infection prevention and control policy, to separate fire safety policy into dedicated section and expand detail in line with insurer's recommendations and to specifically reference fire safety obligations for The Board, HS Committee, Director of Property, HS Coordinator, Parish Priest, Contractors. Accidents and Incidents section amended to cover reporting of fire incidents and Disabled Persons section amended to explicitly cover PEEPs.
V4	07/23	Updated Bishop's Foreword. Addition of role of Bishop's Delegate for Civil Administration. Expand detail for arrangements for Accidents/ Incidents & First Aid, Events, Control of Contractors (clarification of third-party minimum insurance indemnities and gravedigging within scope of CDM Regulations), Safe Access & Egress (new sub-section for cemeteries, memorial gardens and graveyard), Fire Safety Policy (clarification of annual review process). Links to relevant sections of Employee Handbook throughout document.
V5	07/24	Instruction for reporting accidents involving employees to HR (Section 3 Arrangements: Accidents/Incidents & First Aid. Addition of Dignity at Work policy (Introduction); Lightning Protection policy and Unoccupied Buildings policy (Section 3 Arrangements: Premises Management Arrangements
V5.1	07/2025	Addition of Episcopal Vicar for Finance to Roles and Responsibilities.
V5.2	07/2026	Update dates to July 2026.

Appendix: Accident Reporting Procedure (Flow Diagram)

The flow diagram outlines the accident reporting process in the Diocese of Brentwood. We recommend you keep a copy to hand as a reminder e.g., parish office notice board.

