Teddington Baptist Church

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

1. Introduction
The purpose of this policy is to set out the way in which the Church intends to manage its premises in line with good fire safety practice to protect all those using the buildings. It is also to ensure that the Church complies with the legal obligations of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

2. Responsibility
The Leadership Team (LT) is elected by the Church Meeting and has overall responsibility for all Church policies and their implementation. The Responsible Person on LT for the premises including Fire Safety is Ed Wilson. As the Responsible Person, he must (a) carry out or arrange for a risk assessment of the premises; (b) ensure that the Church implements and maintains appropriate and adequate fire safety measures to minimise the risk to life from fire.

The LT has appointed Colin Hicks as the Church's Fire Safety Officer. In that role he is the Competent Person responsible for the implementation of this Fire Safety Policy.

3. General Fire Safety
In August 2015, the Church commissioned an external Fire Safety Risk Assessment. Its recommendations include the installation of a fire alarm system and a number of additional fire safety features (e.g. additional fire doors). This Fire Safety Policy may need to be revised as the recommendations are implemented.

The Church premises have been equipped with a number of general features to improve fire safety:

- Emergency lighting along routes to fire exits;
- Adequate, well maintained fire safety equipment (extinguishers and emergency sirens);
- Appropriate signage including marked fire exits;
- Smoke detectors in the main kitchen and kitchenettes;

The Fire Safety Officer will oversee the inspection and maintenance of these systems and equipment in accordance with the required schedules. Checks on other equipment and systems which contribute to fire safety will also be carried out in accordance with the required schedules:

- Fixed electrical systems will be checked every five years;
- Portable Appliance Tests (PAT) will be conducted annually;
- Gas safety checks will be conducted annually;
- The central heating boilers will be serviced annually under contract.

The Church will also conduct specific processes and encourage a number of practices to minimise the risks of a fire starting and to minimise the risk to individuals in the unlikely event of a fire. These will be informed by an annual review of the Church's Fire Risk Assessment (see below).

4. Fire Risk Assessment
The Church will hold an annual review of its Fire Risk Assessment, taking account of new legislative requirements and drawing, as necessary, upon external advice. The annual review should look at all aspects of fire safety and should identify any actions required to improve fire safety, including any appropriate changes in this Fire Safety Policy.

5. Good Housekeeping
The following "good housekeeping" procedures should be followed throughout the Church premises:

- The "no smoking" rule should be strictly enforced;
- Internal waste bins should be emptied regularly to an external bin housed in the car park away from the buildings. The external bin should be emptied weekly;
- Recycling bins should be cleared regularly and before they are full;

- All escape routes and fire exits should be kept clear and rooms should be kept tidy;
- Flammable materials should be kept well away from any gas and electric fires;
- Any flammable cleaning materials should be stored in a locked store;
- Furniture and furnishings will only be bought (or accepted as donations) if they conform to appropriate fire safety standards;

6. Kitchen
Kitchens present particular risks, especially as sources of potential ignition. In the case of the Church premises, particular care should be taken over the use of the microwave oven and the gas oven, gas grill and gas hob in the main Kitchen:

- The Kitchen should never be left unattended when items are cooking;
- Metal items should not be placed in the microwave and it should be turned off if the kitchen is vacated;
- Saucepans on the gas grill should be turned so their handles do not stick out or over another gas ring.

When any of the gas oven, gas grill or gas hob are used:

- The ventilation hood should be turned on;
- Those using the Kitchen should avoid wearing loose clothing (or take special care to keep their clothing away from flames);
- The gas appliance should be double checked at the end of any use to ensure that the flames are properly extinguished and the gas has been turned off;
- The gas appliances should be cleaned after use (particularly to avoid the build up of fat and waste food which could start a fire).

An information note about use of these gas appliances should be provided to all kitchen users which will include the requirement to notify Reception if any of them are used. The lock-up routine for the premises should include an inspection of the Kitchen to ensure, among other checks, that the gas oven, gas grill and gas hob have been properly turned off.

7. Candles
On the rare occasions when candles are used during services or other activities, care should be taken to ensure:

- That, if possible, the candles used are fixed in one position and that they are good quality slow burning candles placed in a heat resistant container on a stable surface away from flammable materials (like curtains, clothing, hair, foliage and decorations);
- That, if fixed candles are not appropriate and hand held candles are to be used, then they are purpose-made candles with slide-on card drip trays. Any use of hand held candles by children must be closely supervised by responsible adults.

8. Training and Guidance
Employees and volunteers who carried out regular functions on the church premises (for example as stewards, on Reception, in the Church Office) should be given training and guidance at least annually to support the Church in the implementation of this Fire Safety Policy. This should include:

- Identification of the fire detection & alarm systems operating in the building;
- The action to be taken on discovery of a fire or hearing the alarm;
- The evacuation procedure, including procedure for directing members of the public, and other occupants – paying particular attention to those who are physically disabled and those with impaired sight & hearing – to the exits and off the premises;
- The arrangements for calling the emergency services (including the fire brigade);
- The location, purpose and use of fire fighting equipment;
- The location of shut-off valves (see below);
- The detail, and location, of escape routes, especially those not in regular use, as well as the importance of keeping access to escape routes clear;
- The importance of keeping fire doors closed in order to prevent the spread of fire, heat and smoke;
- The reason for not using the lift;
- The importance of general fire precautions and good housekeeping.

The leaders of all groups using the premises should also be given information on actions to be taken in the event of a fire and/or an emergency evacuation.

9. Fire Drills
Fire Drills should be conducted [annually] on both Sundays and on weekdays.

10. Shut-off Valves

The emergency services may need to know where to find the main shut off valves which are as follows:

- The gas shut-off valves are located in the cupboard under the stairs outside the Main Hall gents toilets, in the boiler house and in the Kitchen;
- The water shut-off valves are located underground in the car park and outside the Walpole Crescent door;
- The main electrical switch boxes are located with the meters in the cupboard behind Reception and behind the panel on the Worship Area upper platform. There are additional electrical switch boxes in the Minister's Office, high on the wall in the lobby at the junction of Church Road and Walpole Crescent, and in the Main Hall (high on the wall to the Kitchen).

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