



**Water Lane URC  
Bishop's Stortford  
Health & Safety Policy**

Implementation: October 2025  
Review by: October 2026

## Water Lane URC Statement of Intent

**Water Lane URC**, as the employer of the staff who work in the church, recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing a safe and healthy environment for the staff, and for volunteers, visitors and contractors who come on to their premises.

**Water Lane URC** will take reasonable steps to fulfil these responsibilities within the framework of *the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and *the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999*, as well as those other Regulations, Approved Codes of Practice, Guidance, etc. made under this legislation. **Water Lane URC** will ensure that appropriate policies are in place and kept up-to-date.

To this end, **Water Lane URC**, when required, will procure the services of appropriate health and safety consultants to advise the Church on all related matters and to provide the Church with up-to-date information in relation to its health and safety responsibilities. The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the **Water Lane URC Church Meeting**.

Each member of staff at **Water Lane URC** must recognise that, under the Act, they have a personal responsibility for their own safety as well as for the safety of anyone who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. They also must co-operate, as far as is necessary, with their employer in fulfilling its duties under the Act and supporting legislation as well as under **Water Lane URC's** Health and Safety Policy.

The organisation and arrangements through which **Water Lane URC** aims to fulfil the requirements are set out in the following policy and its appendices.

**Water Lane URC** will provide sufficient resources to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors are kept healthy and safe.

It is a requirement that all members of staff read the Health and Safety Policy and its appendices, and sign that they have done so.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ A Booth \_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of the **Water Lane URC**  
**Elders**

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025

# Health and Safety Policy

## Introduction

**Water Lane URC** is responsible for the overall Health and Safety Policy.

The Church are responsible for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy and for the procedures resulting from the policy.

The Church will develop local arrangements for delivering effective health and safety management, which will set out in detail the roles, responsibilities and duties of named individuals, who will co-ordinate, manage and carry out the local procedures, under the overall supervision of the Church Meeting.

## Aims and Objectives

**Water Lane URC** aims to ensure that so far as is reasonably practicable:

- all staff and volunteers are safeguarded in respect of health, safety and welfare whilst at work;
- all members of the public, including visitors, volunteers and contractors who enter the church premises, are not exposed to any health and safety risks during their business;
- no work is carried out by the church or contractors that is liable to expose staff, volunteers or members of the public to hazards to health, unless suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk are made and necessary measures to prevent or control the risk have been introduced;
- all contractors can demonstrate that they have suitable risk assessments and arrangements for securing proper health and safety, including, where necessary, a written statement of policy.

The Church's objectives are to:

- provide conditions and systems of work for all staff and volunteers which prevent any danger to health. This requires that risk assessments are carried out as appropriate to enable hazards and risks to be identified and to enable the standards of safety to be adapted and enforced;
- ensure that all plant and equipment is maintained properly and that none will be used knowingly when it presents any risks to the safety of the staff, volunteers or the public;
- provide means of access and egress which are safe and without risks to health;
- provide comprehensive information, instruction, training and supervision, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health and safety at work of all staff and volunteers;
- ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all staff, volunteers and members of the public are under continuous review;
- ensure arrangements are made for the safe storage, handling and transport of articles and substances;
- ensure that the church will have, and maintain, up-to-date fire procedures and documentation and that all staff and volunteers are familiar with them;
- develop safety awareness among all staff and volunteers and to promote individual responsibility for health and safety at all levels.

## Responsibilities

This policy is largely dependent upon the total co-operation of every person who works in the church. **Water Lane URC** expects all staff and volunteers to co-operate in ensuring the health and safety of all staff, volunteers and visitors.

The Church Elders have the overall responsibility for:

- ensuring the implementation of and implementing the church's Health and Safety Policy;
- establishing, maintaining, monitoring and reviewing the church's Health and Safety Policy to meet the health and safety requirements in the policy;
- agreeing and maintaining any necessary health, safety and security contracts with contractors;
- appointing Elders to be responsible for liaison on health and safety issues with the staff;
- ensuring that there is a system for appropriate risk assessments to be carried out, recorded and regularly reviewed;
- ensuring that standards of welfare are established and maintained for staff, volunteers and visitors;
- ensuring that staff are trained in health and safety as appropriate;
- ensuring adequate resources to enable the Health and Safety Policy to be carried out;
- ensuring that health and safety issues are put on the agenda of all church meetings.

The Church Elders will:

- considering the **Water Lane URC** Statement of Intent and policies, make and review regularly specific health, safety, welfare and security arrangements for implementing this policy;
- consider accident, incident, near-miss and ill-health records and statistics;
- consider reports of any internal and external inspections;
- consider risk assessment and the management of risks;
- make recommendations on health and safety training throughout the church;
- consider the effectiveness of emergency procedures in the church;
- consider any changes that affect health and safety;
- carry out an annual Status Review and determine any necessary response;
- consider any other items raised by management or the staff representatives;
- report as required to the Church Meeting,

and the Church Elders will thereby:

- ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors, volunteers and any other person using the premises;
- ensure safe working conditions for staff, volunteers and contractors;
- ensure the removal from service of any item of furniture, apparatus or equipment which has been identified as unsafe;
- ensure safe working practices and procedures including those relating to the provision and use of machinery and other apparatus;
- ensure that liaison with contractors is maintained and that regular reports are obtained;
- consult with staff and volunteers on health and safety issues;
- carry out periodic safety reviews and audits;
- identify the training needs of staff and volunteers and to ensure that within the financial resources available adequate and appropriate training is provided;
- encourage staff and volunteers to promote health and safety and to suggest ways of reducing risks;
- ensure that sufficient and appropriate risk assessments are carried out and effective control measures are determined and carried out in a timely manner;

- engage external health and safety experts as appropriate, receive their reports and take any necessary action;
- ensure that contractors and persons hiring any part of the premises are aware of **Water Lane URC's** Health and Safety Policy;
- ensure that all necessary safety signs and notices are displayed;
- ensure that instructions relating to specific areas are displayed and known and understood by all users;
- ensure that fire risk assessments are carried out, and that appropriate equipment is in place and properly maintained
- ensure that regular fire drills are carried out recorded and monitored, that the required notices are in place, and that appropriate training is given to relevant staff.

Water Lane URC does not employ a Caretaker/Site Manger. Daily Cleaning is contracted out to Fina Services Ltd. The day-to-day maintenance and care of the church building is delegated by the Elders to the members of the Finance and Property Committee.

The Finance and Property Committee is responsible to the Church Elders for:

- implementing the appropriate church policies and procedures;
- maintaining an appropriate cleaning schedule;
- ensuring that any other site staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities;
- arranging for the removal from service of any item of furniture, apparatus or equipment which has been identified as unsafe;
- taking appropriate action where necessary to prevent injury to others on the site who might otherwise be exposed to unnecessary dangers, e.g. erect warning signage on wet floors or around open manhole covers;
- ensuring that other site and cleaning staff are adequately supervised;
- ensuring that any personal protective equipment issued to staff is suitable for the task and that training is provided in the use of the equipment;
- ensuring that all site and cleaning staff work in accordance with safe working practices issued by the Church Elders.

All members of staff and volunteers have a duty to:

- take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of themselves, all other staff, visitors, volunteers or contractors in their care;
- take reasonable precautions in safeguarding themselves and others;
- read and understand the **Water Lane URC** Health and Safety Policy;
- observe all health and safety rules and procedures set out by the Church and use all health and safety equipment provided;
- alert the Church Elders to any potential hazard noticed;
- report all accidents, incidents or near-misses that have led or may lead to illness, harm or damage;
- ensure that no person uses a prescribed dangerous machine unless fully instructed in the dangers and precautions to be observed, and have either received sufficient training in work at the machine, or are being supervised by someone with a thorough working knowledge of the machine;
- ensure that they are familiar with fire drills, fire alarm systems, means of escape and evacuation procedures. Staff and volunteers should ensure that there is a fire drill notice clearly visible in the rooms in which they work;
- participate in any relevant training.

## Consultation

All staff and volunteers have a right to raise and be consulted on health and safety issues of concern at any time.

## Organisation

- **Water Lane URC Church Meeting** has overall responsibility for the policies and procedures in the church;
- The Church Elders have overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy and reporting to the Church Meeting;
- The Finance and Property Committee has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the premises, for liaising with contractors, and for reporting to the Church Elders.

## Risk Assessment

The church's risk assessment pro forma must be used by all staff and volunteers.

Risk assessments must be reviewed regularly and at least once a year with a view to ensuring that the control measures have been, and remain, effective.

The Church Elders will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out, and determine which can be done at church level and which by any other outside contractors.

The Church Elders have the discretion to seek advice from external specialist consultants on appropriate delegation, and will report reasons to the Church meeting.

## Measuring and monitoring performance/Status reporting

The Church Elders will ensure, and record, that the following are carried out as appropriate:

- Regular documented audits;
- Site/premises inspections;
- Review of risk assessments and the subsequent control measures;
- Information coming out of church meetings, and how it is dealt with;
- Results of any external reviews/investigations;
- Regular review of accidents/incidents/near-misses and use of the information and experience gained from the review;
- A system of reviewing and developing improvement plans as identified.

The Church Elders will, at the end of each year or appropriate period, draw up a Status Report. The review will use information recorded above and the contents will be reported back to the Church Meeting.

## Equal Opportunities

In making, reviewing and implementing this policy, the church's equal opportunities policy must be considered. **Water Lane URC** will ensure that the appropriate provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and any regulations flowing from it will be incorporated in the Health and Safety Policy and will be conveyed to staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors.

The church must ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the premises and facilities to enable disabled staff, visitors and volunteers to make use of the church's facilities as far as is reasonably practicable. The Disability Accessibility Plan must be kept under review and implemented as appropriate. The church will also consider the provision of the Equality Act 2010 which obliges an employer, where an employee has given notice in

writing that she is pregnant, has given birth within the last six months, or is breastfeeding, to consider the risks in relation to that individual and take action to avoid them.

Date of the next review:

October 2026

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of the **Water Lane URC**  
**Church Meeting**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary to **Water Lane URC**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDICES**

### **Accident / Incident Management**

All accidents/incidents/near-misses must be reported.

- Accidents – where an accident has occurred and harm / injury is sustained;
- Incidents – where an accident has occurred and harm / injury is not sustained;
- Near-miss – where an incident occurred which could have (under similar circumstances) become an accident.

The Church Elders (through the Finance and Property Committee) will carry out investigations into all accidents under the guidance of any appointed competent person with the assistance and co-operation of the relevant persons involved.

### **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.**

The Church Elders have the responsibility for reporting accidents under RIDDOR Regulations with the guidance of any appointed Competent Person.

The Church Elders (through the Finance and Property Committee) will review the incidents recorded in the Accident Book at regular intervals to identify any trends. The Church Elders with responsibility for health and safety, (Andrew Booth), will sign the Accident Book and record that this has been done. The results will be reported to the Church Meeting.

### **Asbestos Policy**

The Church Elders are responsible for making appropriate arrangements for: -

- ensuring that an asbestos survey has been carried out by a specialist company and that annual reviews are made in line with the company's recommendations;
- taking appropriate control measures to prevent Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) from being released by ensuring that: -
  - ACMs have been removed, where possible;
  - ACMs have been encapsulated;
  - ACMs have been sealed to prevent contact;
  - access is denied to ACMs;
  - ACMs are properly identified;
  - no building maintenance work is carried out without reference to the asbestos register and survey report;
- arranging awareness training for all staff and volunteers who are likely to encounter ACMs, including: -
  - identifying asbestos;
  - different types of asbestos;
  - the health hazards posed by asbestos;
  - safe methods of work and safe disposal;
  - legal requirements.
- ensuring that the asbestos log is kept up-to-date;
- reporting on the situation to the Church Meeting.

**The church building underwent a major renovation project in 2025 involving access to all areas of the building including the cellar and roof/floor voids. A full survey and sampling programme was carried out prior to works and no asbestos containing materials or residues were discovered. A copy of this report is kept on file in the church office.**



## **Caretaking and Cleaning**

The person(s) or contractors responsible for all caretaking and cleaning tasks must be competent and appropriately trained in the tasks they are required to carry out. They must have appropriate job descriptions setting out the limits of their management responsibilities. They will be responsible to the Church Elders/Caretaker/Site Manager for the discharge of their responsibilities.

## **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Procedure**

The Church will provide a safe working environment and safe procedures for the handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials, by undertaking a suitable and sufficient COSHH assessment. Information, training and instruction on the safe use, storage, handling and control of hazardous substances will be given where appropriate (where risk assessments identify a need). Safety Data Sheets (SDS) will be obtained from the manufacturers of each substance and will be kept for use by staff, volunteers and contractors. Users of relevant substances must ensure that the substances are not decanted into other containers unless they are suitably and correctly labelled. Note: in the case of all cleaning materials this is delegated to the cleaning contractor (Fina Services Ltd).

All staff, volunteers and contractors must abide by the findings of the COSHH assessments when using hazardous substances and understand the hazards and safety precautions involved.

The Church and its cleaning contractor will provide all necessary control measures identified by the COSHH Assessment, e.g. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

## **Display Screen Equipment**

***The Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992*** are for the protection of staff and volunteers who regularly use display screen equipment and anyone using the equipment under extended church arrangements.

In accordance with Regulation 6, Provision of Training, the Church will ensure that all users who make regular use of their workstations have been provided with adequate health and safety training.

## **Drugs, Smoking and Alcohol**

Water Lane URC will determine a detailed policy on illegal drugs, smoking and alcohol, with regards to any member of staff, volunteer or contractor whose proper performance of their duties is or may be impaired because of drinking alcohol or the use of drugs.

The Church Elders will not allow any member of staff who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs to enter the church premises or undertake work on its behalf. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours is a disciplinary offence, which might be considered gross misconduct. It could lead to disciplinary action including summary dismissal. It is Water Lane URC's policy that drug or alcohol misuse should be treated in the first instance as a health issue rather than a disciplinary issue.

Smoking is prohibited anywhere on the church premises and within the curtilage of those premises.

## Electrical Equipment

Water Lane URC will comply with *the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989*.

Staff and volunteers must not attempt repairs nor make modifications to electrical equipment other than those normally associated with daily operations. Any defects or malfunctions must be reported to a member of the Finance and Property Committee.

It is the church's policy that: -

- the fixed electrical installations in the church will be inspected and tested on a 5-yearly basis by approved electrical contractors and any maintenance to prevent danger is carried out;
- only electrical equipment provided by the church will be used;
- staff and volunteers must be alerted to the dangers of defective wiring and equipment and be encouraged to visually inspect electrical equipment before use and to report any defects immediately;
- where portable electrical equipment is used outdoors, a residual current device (RCD) is used to reduce the risk of serious electrical shock. Staff and volunteers must use RCD adaptors if one is not fitted into the fixed wiring and to cease using any equipment which causes the RCD to trip;
- only trained and qualified persons may be allowed to work on electrical equipment;
- any contractor must be able to demonstrate to the Church Elders that he/she is appropriately qualified;
- all portable appliances must be tested in accordance with the IEE Regulations. Formal inspections/tests of portable electrical equipment will be carried out annually to identify any maintenance that is required to prevent danger. The Church Elders will appoint suitably qualified staff or external contractors to make checks of equipment in the church. However, all staff or volunteers that use any electrical equipment are expected to check the equipment for visible defects each time the equipment is used. A Portable Electrical Appliance Register will be prepared to record the safety status each portable appliance. **Andrew Booth and <AG> are certified to carry out testing of portable appliances and are responsible for keeping the testing and the register up-to-date.**

## Fire Safety Policy

This policy addresses the church's obligation under *The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* that requires the church to: -

- Develop a policy to minimize the risks associated with fire;
- Reduce the risk of an outbreak of fire;
- Reduce the risk of the spread of fire;
- Provide a means of escape;
- Demonstrate preventative action;
- Maintain documentation and records in respect of fire safety management.

To achieve these aims, the Church will provide and maintain: -

- A nominated 'Responsible Person' - at Water Lane URC the 'Responsible Person' is the Church Elder with responsibility for health and safety, **(Andrew Booth)**.
- A suitable organisational structure with clarity in the roles and responsibilities each person has with regards to fire.
- Suitable arrangements for: -
  - identifying fire hazards and managing risks (risk assessments);
  - the provision, testing and maintenance of fire detection, firefighting and emergency lighting equipment;

- reviewing, updating and testing the church's emergency evacuation procedures;
- maintaining documents and records;
- information and training to church users relevant to their roles and responsibilities in relation to fire.

## Fire Wardens

The church will identify Fire Wardens who will: -

- contact and provide essential information to the Fire and Rescue Service if required;
- be pro-active in ensuring that fire safety precautions are observed around the church;
- assist in evacuations and drills.
- at Water Lane URC these duties will be performed by the Office Manager and/or all Serving Elders.

## Fire Risk Assessments

The Competent Person shall make, record, review and where applicable, revise Fire Risk Assessments at regular intervals in accordance with ***the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005***. A review of the Fire Risk Assessment must also be carried out if there has been any significant change in the physical layout of the church buildings or staircases or a change of building use.

The Fire Risk Assessment must take into consideration everyone who may come on to the premises, whether they are staff, visitors, volunteers, or members of the public. Particular attention will be paid to those persons who have a disability or special needs.

## Induction

The capabilities of all new staff and volunteers with regards to health and safety will be considered before employment starts. Appropriate and sufficient training and information must be given to new staff and volunteers to ensure that they are aware of the church's Health and Safety Policy and arrangements, particularly: -

- evacuation procedures;
- first aid and injury reporting procedures;
- location of electricity and gas isolation points;
- any other relevant emergency procedure.

## Legionella Bacteria

***The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2013 (COSHH)*** provide a framework of actions designed to assess, prevent or control the risk from bacteria like *Legionella* and take suitable precautions. *The Approved Code of Practice: Legionnaires' disease: The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems (L8)* states that "As an employer, or person in control of premises, you must appoint someone competent to take responsibility for controlling any identified risk from exposure to legionella bacteria."

**Water Lane URC** has appointed **Andrew Booth** as the Duty Holder.

The Church Elders are responsible for ensuring that: -

- arrangements are in place for checking the safety of water in the church premises;
- any control measures identified in surveys are put in place;
- regular inspections in line with HSE recommendations are carried out;
- appropriate remedial work is carried out to prevent contamination, and prevent stagnant water gathering in dead legs of pipework etc.;
- staff and volunteers are kept informed of any incidence of legionella bacteria;

- an inspection record is kept in the church records.
- Note: the church building at Water Lane underwent major renovation work during 2000 (when a water supply was first installed for toilets and a small kitchen) and in 2025 (when the kitchen was enlarged). The water supply network is contained within a small section of the church. Water supply comes directly from the mains with no storage tanks or dead-legs in pipework.
- An annual inspection of the water boiler system, including checking of operating temperatures and sampling for legionella, will be carried out annually by an appropriate contractor.

## **Lettings and Extended Church Activities**

**Water Lane URC** will have in place a contract for hirers that will cover health and safety aspects during the letting. The Church Elders through the Finance and Property Committee are responsible for co-ordinating lettings of the premises in accordance with the contract and the church's own Lettings Agreement.

Where use is sought of specialist equipment or fittings, a suitably qualified person must be available to supervise such use and no equipment or fittings will be removed or adjusted without previous approval from the Church Meeting.

The Church Elders (though the Finance and Property Committee) are responsible for: -

- checking that the premises are left in a safe and reasonable order by others before locking up;
- implementing all safe practices as required by the contract;
- ensuring that hirers, contractors and others who are working on or hiring the church premises conduct themselves in such a manner that all statutory and advisory safety requirements are met at all times;
- ensuring that all hirers, contractors and others using the church premises or facilities familiarise themselves with the relevant parts of this Health and Safety Policy, and comply with all safety directives;
- ensuring that hirers, contractors and others using the church premises will not introduce equipment for use on the church's premises, alter fixed installations, remove fire and safety notices or equipment or take any action that may create hazards for any persons using the premises at that time.

## **Lone Working**

Water Lane URC's policy is that risk assessments must be undertaken for all staff, volunteers and contractors who come into the church, or remain in the church, in areas where there are no other persons in the vicinity. The risk assessments should consider the circumstances of the church.

As far as is reasonably practicable no member of staff, volunteer or contractor may work alone in any building. Staff and volunteers who have the need to work beyond the building closure time should inform the Church Elders and arrange for another member of staff or volunteer to be present with them. Both parties should leave the premises at the same time.

The Church Elders will determine procedures for ensuring that no member of staff, volunteer or contractor will work alone on the church premises without the Church Elders (or a member of the Finance and Property Committee) knowing that they are there, and have appropriate methods of communication in an emergency.

Arrangements for registering and supervising the persons working alone should form part of the risk assessment, along with the provision of appropriate alarm systems. Staff (especially cleaners and volunteers) running activities should receive clear guidelines on working alone.

## Management of Contractors

Contractors will be selected based on competence and suitability to undertake the required work. The Church Meeting will be informed of any proposals to engage a contractor. All contractors will be required to submit a copy of their Health & Safety Policy and risk assessments to the Church Elders before the contract commences. Method statements and safe systems of work will also be required for approval. In addition, contractors must provide evidence of adequate insurance cover.

All contractors carrying out work at the church will be issued a Permit to Work and, when appropriate, a Hot Work Permit.

The Church Elders have the responsibility for signing off the health and safety arrangements as suitable and satisfactory and may obtain appropriate professional/expert advice if it is deemed necessary.

## Manual handling / Safe moving and handling

Water Lane URC's policy is to provide safe working procedures and to comply with ***the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992*** and will ensure that: -

- a suitable and sufficient assessment of the manual handling operations, for assessing the health and safety risks, is carried out whenever necessary;
- all staff and volunteers undertaking manual handling operations know their responsibilities;
- lifting equipment will be regularly maintained, inspected, and certificated, in accordance to ***the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)***;
- all operators of lifting equipment (i.e. fork lift trucks, pulleys) are properly instructed and trained in their use, and their training documented, monitored and reviewed;
- all staff and volunteers are informed not to lift loads that are heavy, bulky, unwieldy, difficult to grasp, unstable, unpredictable or unsafe (i.e. sharp) without a task-specific risk assessment to identify special hazards, appropriate equipment and suitable training.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Water Lane URC recognises that ***the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992*** clearly states that *Personal Protective Equipment should only be used when risks cannot be avoided or sufficiently reduced by other preventive measures or through work re-organisation.*

All PPE issued must be stored as per the manufacturer's specification and staff and volunteers have the legal duty to comply with the policy and directions and not to alter or misuse any health and safety equipment, including PPE, supplied for their safety.

## Pregnant Staff and New Mothers

Under ***the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999*** the Church has a responsibility to ensure that risk assessments are carried out and suitable controls are put in place for new and expectant mothers with specific attention paid to: -

- working with hazardous substances;
- stressful environments;
- movement around the premises;
- manual handling;
- confined working space;
- using an unsuitable workstation;
- infectious diseases.

## **Staff Welfare**

**Water Lane URC** recognises its obligations and responsibilities under ***the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992***. The church will ensure that the premises meet the health, safety and welfare needs of all its staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors. The Church Elders will consider and introduce measures to ensure that the working environment is adequate in respect of ventilation, working temperature, lighting, traffic routes, house-keeping, and general welfare provision – i.e. toilets, washing facilities, drinking water, changing rooms and eating/rest facilities. The Church Elders will also ensure that workplace facilities are maintained to an acceptable level of hygiene and repair.

## **Visitors and volunteers**

Water Lane URC is responsible for the health, safety and security of visitors and volunteers while on site. Visitors and volunteers will be given appropriate fire/emergency instructions when they arrive on site, under arrangements determined by this policy and implemented by the Church Elders.

In the event of out-of-hours meetings, the person(s) organising and in control of the meeting will be responsible for all attendees at that meeting and for ensuring that the church's security arrangements are implemented and upheld.

## **Waste Management**

Water Lane URC will comply with all Waste Management regulations.

It will ensure that: -

- all waste stored on the premises will be suitably protected and stored responsibly;
- all waste electrical equipment is disposed of as per the WEEE regulations;
- suitable containers for first aid disposal are supplied in order not to pose a health & safety risk either to staff, volunteers, public or the environment;
- any storage is in keeping with the current Fire Regulations.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for: -

- arranging to clear up spillages, which occur whilst they oversee the area concerned;
- reporting accumulation of waste, or large items of waste that require special attention, to the Church Elders or a member of the Finance and Property Committee who will arrange for its removal and disposal;
- reporting other spillages or leaks to the Church Elders/member of Finance and Property Committee who will arrange for them to be dealt with.

## **Work Equipment**

All staff and volunteers will be trained in the operation of machinery and equipment specific to their function. Relevant information will be supplied and appropriate supervision provided.

Water Lane URC staff and volunteers are required to use all equipment correctly and in accordance with their training and the manufacturers' recommendations.

Staff and volunteers will:

- never remove, make inoperative or reduce the effectiveness of any equipment or machinery guard;
- never operate any equipment or machinery when it is functioning improperly or at any time when its use would be hazardous. Such equipment will be taken out of commission until repair or replacement is effected,

and will ensure that: -

- it is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and kept in good repair;
- suitable records of equipment and their maintenance will be kept by the Church Elders.

## **Working at Height**

Staff and volunteers are reminded that falls from heights are the most common cause of fatal and serious accidents at work.

The need to reach things at height should be eliminated wherever possible e.g. mounting displays, storing things below head height, using window poles instead of climbing to open windows. Where this is not possible, proper access equipment must be used and the following rules followed: -

- Staff and volunteers must not use ladders or stepladders if they are working alone in or around the church as if an incident occurs there is no one to call for assistance.
- Before using a ladder or stepladder, staff and volunteers must make sure it is the right equipment for the work and in good condition;
- Scaffold towers or specialist access equipment may be required to reach the position and enable the work to be carried out safely and the equipment must be erected in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions by a person who is competent, having received sufficient instruction and training.

The Church Elders will implement a set of rules for working at heights in line with the following rules: -

- Check that equipment is in good condition; do not use ladders or stepladders with cracked, broken or splinters stile/rungs/steps/hinges/cords/clips or other defects.
- Check that the ladder is clear of overhead electricity cables.
- Set the ladder at the correct angle (1 out to every 4 up).
- Never climb higher than the fourth rung from the top to ensure adequate handhold.
- If using the ladder for access onto a flat roof or platform etc. make sure it extends at least 1.1m above the stepping off point to provide an adequate handhold, especially for coming down.
- Move ladders and step ladders to avoid the need to over-reach.
- Secure the ladder at the top wherever possible; this ensures the ladder cannot slip sideways or backwards and whilst doing this get someone to foot the base. If this is impracticable, see that it is firmly secured at the base or footed by a responsible person.
- Ladders less than 3m in length, where securing or footing is not practical, can be used unsecured or footed, providing they are set at the correct angle on a firm, level, non-slippery surface.
- Ladders that are less than 3m in length must be secured as above or footed.
- Make sure that extension ladders have enough overlap to prevent collapse.
- Stand the ladder or step-ladder on a firm level base and not on loose material.
- Clean all wet, icy or greasy rungs or steps before use; make sure footwear is in good condition and free from mud or grease on the soles before climbing.
- Carry light tools and equipment in pockets or a holster/tool bag slung from a strap over the shoulder; use a hoist line to raise larger items when at the working position.
- Stepladders must be long enough to reach the work and provide a secure handhold. Do not stand on the top step or platform on a stepladder unless it is constructed with a secure handhold.
- Always spread stepladders to their fullest extent for stability and check retaining hinges/cords/clips are secure.
- Whenever possible place step ladders at right angles to work, i.e. with the front or back of the steps facing the work. Pushing, pulling or reaching sideways whilst on step ladders should be avoided because it is less stable; where this is unavoidable another person should support the steps to prevent them tipping.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ A Booth \_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of the Water Lane URC  
Elders

Date: \_\_\_\_27<sup>th</sup> October 2025\_\_\_\_