



## **St Hugh of Lincoln Church Health & Safety And the Hire of the Church Hall**

Thank you for hiring our Church Hall for your event. We sincerely hope that your visit to St Hugh's will be a happy and safe experience. Sadly, accidents do happen and we, in the church community, have a duty to try to make our properties as safe as possible for you to prevent accidents happening. To achieve this, we ask for your help by reading these brief notes which provide guidance on the use of the Hall, what to do in the event of an emergency and how to log and report any accidents which occur or hazards which you identify. Our guiding principles are captured in the Diocesan Health & Safety policy, part of which is reprinted below.

Extract from the Diocesan Parish Administration Manual : Section 13 – Health & Safety Policy

“Effective health and safety management reduces the risks associated with our activities and helps to prevent accidents, injury and ill health. We shouldn't look on it as preventing us from doing things so much as asking ourselves if what we are doing is safe and whether we could improve safety by doing things differently.

What we are aiming for in the Diocese, is to provide and maintain an environment which allows people to be involved in God's work and celebrate their beliefs without being harmed.”

In the context of the current Health and Safety legislation, the Parish Priest is the 'Responsible Person' for the Parish who is charged with ensuring that the correct processes and procedures are in place to comply with current H&S requirements. The Parish Finance Committee is responsible for assisting with the overall development and delivery of the H&S policy in the parish.

Where special 'Events' are being planned, it is the responsibility of the event co-ordinator to ensure that the Health and Safety of the participants is actively considered and incorporated into the planning and delivery of the event. This is particularly important when planning events which include:-

- Young people and infants
- The use of candles
- People with special needs
- Large numbers of people
- People who may not be familiar with the church or the surrounding area

Because of the adverse publicity and penalties applied where accidents occur and no proof of H&S considerations can be provided, it is essential for responsibilities to be assigned to individuals who are competent to undertake the duty, providing them with check lists which detail their duties. The co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that each nominated person is present at the event and if any nominated person fails to attend, reassigning their duties.

# St Hugh's Church Hall – Information for Hirers

1. The Hall contains a number of pieces of equipment. If you are uncertain how these work, please ask for a demonstration before commencing the hire. A folder containing many of the equipment brochures is stored in the bottom drawer in the kitchen. Please report any damaged equipment to the Hall administrator as soon as possible to enable us to repair or replace and to avoid inconveniencing future Hall users.
2. When the Hall is occupied, the exit door in the kitchen servery must remain unlocked as this is a Fire Exit. All other doors have crush bolts which allow them to be opened from the inside in the event of an emergency.
3. The main electrical isolator for the Hall, the gas meter and isolating valve and the water stopcock are all located in the meter room off the main hall. For safety, this door must be kept locked unless access is required to the valves or meters.
4. **Gas Leak**  
If you smell gas when entering the building, leave any accessible doors and windows open to vent the gas. Evacuate the building and move a safe distance away from the Hall, stopping access to other personnel. Call **Transco on 0800 111 999** to report the leak as an emergency. Call at the Presbytery and advise the Parish Priest – if he is not available, call the Hall Administrator. Don't light matches or operate electrical equipment.
5. **Fire**  
In the event of a fire, the most important factor to consider is the safety of the people in the Hall and the surrounding area. Evacuate the Hall and ask a responsible person to lead those evacuated to safety – congregate in the church car park on the far side of Victoria Road for a roll call – a safe distance from the fire and leaving clear access for the emergency services. Ask them to summon the emergency services and call at the Presbytery to advise the Parish Priest. Quickly assess the fire:
  - is anyone trapped or missing? Search the accessible areas – consider your own safety!! Notify the fire brigade on arrival.
  - can the fire be tackled with the on site fire extinguishers? If the fire is small, consider tackling it with a suitable extinguisher – consider your own safety!!
6. **Emergency Contacts**  
In the event of any emergency, you **MUST** notify the Parish Priest in the Presbytery, next to the Hall. His house may also be in danger! If he is not available, contact the Hall Administrator. Contact emergency services as appropriate.
7. **First Aid / Accident Book**  
A First Aid kit is kept in the Hall. Please feel free to use this for minor accidents. If you use the box, please advise the Hall Administrator so that supplies can be replenished. If you need to use the First Aid box, you should also consider filling in the Accident Book. Once the details are complete, please return the tear off slip to the Hall Administrator.
8. **General**  
Your attention is drawn to section 10 of the Hire Contract which specifically covers our Health and Safety requirements. The list is **NOT** exhaustive and users of the Hall are reminded of their responsibilities under the various pieces of Health and Safety legislation.
9. **After the Event – Vacating the Premises**  
Section 22 of the Hire Contract lists the responsibilities of the Hirer when vacating the premises. All of these actions are essential to maintain the safety of the Hall, our neighbours and future Hall users. Please ensure that the Hall is correctly secured and all services are correctly shut down as detailed.  
  
We reserve the right to claim excess costs from a hirer where gas, electric and water services are not correctly reset to their correct state as detailed in section 22 of the Hire Contract.
10. **Hot Water Boiler**  
The water boiler delivers **VERY HOT WATER**. Please do **NOT** allow minors to climb on to the work top or to operate the boiler valve.