



Churchyard Safety Policy

All Saints' Church, Walsoken

Please refer to Church document H&S_Doc_001 for all General Health & Safety requirements

Specific Policy

This Health & Safety (H&S) sub-policy controls the safety of the churchyard at church.

Vehicles

There are no roadside parking places controlled by the Church, visitors to the Church will be encouraged to park with due care & attention when parking to visit the church. Pedestrians and drivers should be considerate of other road users when visiting the Church. There is vehicular access to the Church and although this use is rare, drivers should act safely using courteous driving while using this access. Pedestrians should act with the same level of awareness as though they were crossing any busy road when this vehicular access is being used. All vehicles must not drive faster than 5mph. Pedestrians and drivers are responsible for their own safety. Pedestrians (& cyclists) have priority over vehicles as they are more vulnerable than people in vehicles. Cyclists should dismount at the edge of the Church property. All people at Church must be appropriately vigilant concerning pedestrians and any moving vehicles.

Churchyard

The closed churchyard's safety is a balance between doing what is sensible and practical in such a way that it is managed delicately as the ownership of memorials remains with the family of the deceased, yet a positive duty of maintenance is imposed on the local authority and breach of that duty could make that authority liable were any person injured. It can be argued that this duty is shared by the PCC, and any legal proceedings could be against the local authority and/or the PCC.

Reference Documents

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials (Ministry of Justice).

Procedure

A risk assessment method consistent with the "Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials" document (issued by the Ministry of Justice) is used by the All-Saints' Church. It is noted that the responsibility for safety falls equally to the church PCC and local authority. In carrying out this risk assessment the PCC is discharging its duty of care in the closed churchyard (from church side of the lime trees border & within the church grounds) this risk assessment will be made available to investigating authorities if the need arises.

It is recognised that the likelihood of a churchyard hazard causing an injury is low and that if an injury did happen that it is unlikely to be serious. The congregation are asked to litter pick if it's safe and appropriate.

Four main areas will be assessed annually using form H&S_Doc_013F.

- 1) The paths, grass, boundary & roadways in the churchyard.
- 2) The memorials in the church yard.
- 3) The trees in the churchyard.
- 4) The exterior of the church.

These will each be considered for

- 1) Physical safety.
- 2) Church security.
- 3) Church building preservation.

It will be the churchwarden's responsibility to complete this risk assessment requirement every three years (using H&S_Doc_013F). The area considered is given in diagram 1. Issues will be recorded for remedial action progressed via the church PCC meetings.

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All Saints' Church – Walsoken

Forms

Form 1: Churchyard risk assessment form

All Saints' Church, Walsoken			
Churchyard Risk Assessment Form			
PART 1: Paths, grass, boundary & roadways		Responses (Circle)	
Is the boundary (fences, gates,& walls etc.) safe from hazards?	Yes	No	N/A
Is the whole grassed area free from large dips, bumps, and other hazards?	Yes	No	
Are the roadways and paths clear from hazards to cars and pedestrians?	Yes	No	
Is the area free of other unspecified hazards been identified?	Yes	No	
PART 2: The memorials			
For stability testing of any suspect memorials the "Hand test" should be carried out. The hand test is standing to one side of the memorial and applying firm but steady pressure in different directions to determine to what degree, if any, the memorial is loose. Pay [articular attention to memorials close to footpaths.			
Are all memorials free from bonding issues causing a hazard?	Yes	No	

Diagrams

Diagram 1: Area of the churchyard risk assessment



Appendices

None

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