

Oldham Bethel Church

Health & Safety Policy

Church details

Charity number: 1189340

Church address: Oldham Bethel Church, Waterloo St, Oldham, OL4 1EQ

Email: info@oldhambethelchurch.org.uk

This policy first adopted / last reviewed: 26/03/2026

This policy should be reviewed biennially. The next review is due in: March 2028

Our statement of general policy is:

- To provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities.
- To consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- To provide safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for our employees and volunteers and provide them with the necessary information, training and supervision.
- To ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation and others who may visit our building.
- To review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Organisation and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Trustees

Overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the trustees. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to individuals.

The trustees of Oldham Bethel Church have general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The church deacons will together act as Health and Safety Officers and carry the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy.

The responsibility of the Health and Safety Officers shall be to:

1. be familiar with health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises.
2. be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed.
3. ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place.
4. ensure the church is clean and tidy.
5. ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained.
6. ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained.
7. ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

Responsibility of Employees and Volunteers

All employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises.

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

1. comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.
2. report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to a Health & Safety Officer.
3. report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.

Arrangements

Accidents and first aid

Health surveillance is not required.

The first-aid box is kept in the church kitchen. The first aid box is maintained by the deacons.

The risk of injury to employees and attendees is considered to be low. Leaders will be reminded annually that all minor accidents or near misses are to be relayed to one of the Health & Safety Officers who will record the incident using our online recording system.

All major accidents and incidents and cases of work-related ill-health will be reported to the Safeguarding Officer. Full details of reportable accidents and incidents can be found in Appendix 1.

The trustees are responsible for reporting accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Safeguarding Officer.

Fire Safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

1. an assessment of the fire risks in the church.
2. a check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
3. a check that people who may be in the building can get out safely including, if necessary, the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage.
4. to provide reasonable firefighting equipment.

5. a check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire.
6. a regular check that our firefighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company.

Electrical Safety

All users of electrical equipment should take responsibility for checking that the equipment they are using is in a safe condition – a quick but thorough visual check is all that is needed to identify most potential hazards. Any faulty items should no longer be used and should either be removed or labelled, 'do not use,' to avoid others using them. Any faults must be reported to the deacons for action.

Every year all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, knows how to use it and can correctly interpret the results. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of.

Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a 'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.

Gas Equipment Safety

Our boiler is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register. Any necessary work required for safety is to be implemented immediately.

Hazardous Substances

There are no substances which are subject to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) stored or used in the building with the exception of small quantities of domestic cleaning products stored in either the kitchen or boiler room. These must be kept in their original containers to ensure clear labelling.

Safe Equipment

The deacons will be responsible for identifying all equipment and areas of the building requiring regular maintenance.

The deacons will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up.

The deacons will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.

Preparation of Food

All the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs will be followed.

All food handlers will receive adequate supervision, instruction and training including, as appropriate, safe food preparation and storage, including storage at correct temperatures and cleaning procedures.

Manual Handling (lifting, carrying and moving loads)

Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable.

Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will carry out risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts and hoists where necessary.

The necessary training will be given to all those employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

An annual risk assessment of the church building is to be undertaken by the deacons.

Annual risk assessments of regular activities will be completed by group leaders. Additional risk assessments will be completed for one-off high-risk activities or days out / weekends away.

Safeguarding

Oldham Bethel Church operates a Safeguarding policy. A copy of the full policy is available from the church website and the member's area of the church website.

Appendix 1: Accident Recording and Reporting at Oldham Bethel Church

Oldham Bethel Church will take all reasonable action necessary to prevent accidents to employees, voluntary workers, visitors and others who may visit church premises.

We are governed by RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995). RIDDOR guidance stipulates that certain accidents or 'dangerous occurrences' (that is near-miss events) must be recorded and reported to the HSE using the official form found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm

Good practice would suggest that all other accidents requiring first aid treatment should be recorded. Such accidents must be reported to the deacons who will record the event using our online system. This enables monitoring of accidents to allow poor practice and high-risk activities to be identified.

If a major accident occurs or a near-miss occurs, the responsible person (usually the group leader) should inform the deacons immediately. Further details of what constitutes a major accident can be found below.

The following occurrences must be reported to and recorded by the deacons immediately:

For employees:

- Any accident which causes death.
- Any accident which causes major injury, including:
 - fracture (other than to fingers, thumbs and toes);
 - amputation;
 - dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine;
 - loss of sight (temporary or permanent);
 - chemical or hot metal burn to the eye or any penetrating injury to the eye;
 - injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn leading to unconsciousness, or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours;
 - any other injury leading to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or unconsciousness, or requiring resuscitation, or requiring admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours;
 - unconsciousness caused by asphyxia or exposure to a harmful substance or biological agent.
- Acute illness requiring medical treatment or loss of consciousness arising from absorption of any substance by inhalation, ingestion or through the skin.
- Acute illness requiring medical treatment where there is reason to believe that this resulted from exposure to a biological agent or its toxins or infected material.
- Any accident which results in the individual not being able to carry out their normal work duties for seven consecutive days following (but not including) the day of the accident.

For members of the public (i.e. all non-staff users of the church premises):

- Any accident which causes death.
- Any accident which results in the individual being taken to hospital for treatment from the scene of the accident.

Dangerous occurrences

The following near-miss incidents are also recordable and need reporting:

- Collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment;
- Explosion, collapse or bursting of any closed vessel or associated pipe work;
- Failure of any freight container in any of its load-bearing parts;
- Plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines;
- Electrical short circuit or overload causing fire or explosion;
- Any unintentional explosion, misfire, failure of demolition to cause the intended collapse, projection of material beyond a site boundary, injury caused by an explosion;
- Accidental release of a biological agent likely to cause severe human illness;
- Failure of industrial radiography or irradiation equipment to de-energise or return to its safe position after the intended exposure period;
- Malfunction of breathing apparatus while in use or during testing immediately before use;
- Failure or endangering of diving equipment, the trapping of a diver, an explosion near a diver, or an uncontrolled ascent;
- Collapse or partial collapse of a scaffold over five meters high, or erected near water where there could be a risk of drowning after a fall;
- Unintended collision of a train with any vehicle;
- Dangerous occurrence at a well (other than a water well);
- Dangerous occurrence at a pipeline;
- Failure of any load-bearing fairground equipment, or derailment or unintended collision of cars or trains;
- A road tanker carrying a dangerous substance overturns, suffers serious damage, catches fire or the substance is released;
- A dangerous substance being conveyed by road is involved in a fire or released.

Appendix 2: Emergency Information for Users of Oldham Bethel Church Premises

The following information will be available in the entrance foyer of the church building(s), providing emergency details and contact information for all users of the building(s):

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In the event of a fire please:

1. Activate the fire alarm using one of the emergency call points.
2. Evacuate the building to the assembly point the junction of Marlborough Street and Waterloo Street.
3. Call 999.

GAS FAULT

The emergency gas shut off is in the kitchen.

ELECTRICAL FAULT

To turn the electricity off in an emergency, use the electrical fuseboards which can be found in the cupboard in the foyer immediately outside the upper room.

WATER LEAK

The water stopcock is located under the sink in the kitchen.

FIRST AID

The first aid kit is located in the kitchen.

All minor accidents / incidents requiring first aid should be reported to and recorded by the deacons.

Major accidents / incidents (requiring hospitalisation) or near-misses must be reported immediately to the deacons.