FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Church	All Saints Church
Address	Grayswood Road, Haslemere, Surrey, GU27 2DJ
Diocese	Guildford
Responsible Person	Parochial Church Council (PCC)
Nominated Risk Assessor	Diana Ramsden (Church Warden)
Date completed	August 2025
Review date	May 2027

PCC Statement

As a church, we understand that we are required to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (even if we have no employees).

We note that we are required to take such general fire precautions as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of employees, if we have any, and to take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances to ensure that the premises are safe for all visitors to the church including volunteers, members of the congregation, and contractors. Our Fire Risk Assessment and arrangements are therefore directed to the safety of people rather than the protection of the building itself.

We understand the PCC is the responsible party, and we will appoint one or more competent persons as appropriate to assist us in undertaking the preventative and protective measures. We understand it is the responsibility of the **Responsible Person(s)** to record fully the following information in the fire risk assessment:-

- All findings from their fire risk assessment regardless of the size or purpose of the premises in full.
- Fire Safety Arrangements that show how you manage fire safety in the building. These can be anything from procedures you need to have written down to polices you have in place.
- Details of the appointed Fire Risk Assessor who undertakes or reviews any or all of the fire risk assessment.

In carrying out our Fire Risk Assessment, we have followed the Government guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and have noted from this document that the action we take should be common sense and in the main, not expensive. We have also noted Appendix C of the guidance for Fire safety risk assessment: small and medium places of assembly which refers to listed and historic buildings and note that we will need to endeavour to strike a balance between ensuring sufficient fire safety measures are in place for the safety of people, yet avoid extensive or expensive alterations and helping to maintain the character of the building.

Signed on behalf of the PCC:

Building Details

Number of floors	One (1)
Approximate floor area	325sqm

Description of Property

There is one large open area with a high vaulted roof which includes the nave, choir, chancel, north transept between which there are no fire breaks. There is a single aisle and an organ chamber.

Leading off the side transept there is a toilet and church office/vestry, both of which have substantial doors which can be closed to prevent the spread of a fire.

Leading off the choir section there is a choir vestry door (solid oak) leading to the main choir vestry. In the choir vestry there is a solid oak door leading to the bell tower and a second solid oak door leading to a small outer vestry which in turn has a solid door leading to the external steps.

Construction Details

The church is built of stone with a tiled roof and cedar wood shingles on the spire. The internal frame is timber. The floor is solid construction of wood and some stonework.

Use of the church

There are usually one or two services each Sunday in the main church. There are occasional special services e.g. weddings, baptisms and funerals plus the occasional concert. This includes school services at least once per term.

The church office is used on Monday and Thursday mornings by the Administrator and occasionally at other times during the week.

The north transept is used periodically for meetings e.g. PCC meetings in the evening plus other daytime activities.

Other activities include weekly church cleaning, flower arranging and miscellaneous visits for maintenance and other checks.

People

Average no. of attendees at 10.00am	40 – 50
Average no. of attendees at 8.00am	4 – 8
Approx. No. of people attending special events	Up to 120 (see below)
Approx. no. of attendees at other times	1 – 5

People at special risk from fire

- Wheelchair users
- Elderly
- Children especially school services including staff
- People with temporary disabilities
- Lone workers

There are a limited number of children attending Sunday services and there is a small play area at the back of the nave which is near the main entrance.

Other background information	
Previous fire losses	None
Proximity of site to other buildings	Church is in a stand alone setting
Date of last quinquennial	25.1.21
Next quinquennial due	11th March 2026

Potential fire hazards in the church

Electrical	
Fixed electrical wiring system	
Last inspection	9.6.23
Follow up works completed	3.1.24
Work carried out by	CES Lighting & Electrical Specialists LLP, Crusader Hall, 25C Stanley Park Road, Wallington, Surrey, CR0 6HL 020 8835 2816

Portable Appliance Testing	
Have all appliances been tested	All items found have been tested excluding the sound system where the cables and plugs are in fixed positions. To be tested at the next test in November/December 2030.
Date of last test	2.12.25
Frequency of testing	Recommended every 5 years as most plugs and cables are in fixed positions. Discussed with the electrician (CES)
Who carried out testing	CES, Crusaders Hall, 25c Stanley Park Road, Wallington, Surrey, SM9 0HL 020 8835 2816
Are failed electrical items removed immediately	If found, yes
Is the use of trailing leads and multi-point adaptors limited as much as possible	The new sound system has trailing cables, but these are kept to a small area which does not have any footfall. Signs should be used when cleaning is in progress and using the hoover.

Heating systems

LPG	N/A
Solid fuels	N/A
Oil fired boiler	N/A
Gas boiler	
Date of last service	5.6.25
Next service due	5.6.26
Contractor	Brix Ltd, 23 Smithbrook Kilns, Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 8JJ 01483 894870

Arson

Have we considered arson/malicious attacks	Only if special works are being undertaken e.g. roofing work
Is there any fuel stored on site	No
Are there combustibles stored on site	Yes – candles/general office paperwork/ vestments. Lighters and matches locked away when not required.
Have we removed all items which could be used by an arsonist?	As far as is practicable. The risk in this community is very low as defined by Police data
Tea point	We have one tea point with a dishwasher and Quooker unit. Light use only.
Lightning Protection	
Last Inspection	8.7.24
Next inspection – every 2.5 years	December 2026/January 2027
Contractor	Bacon Group, 7a West Station Business Park, Ital Road, Malden Essex CM9 6FF
ADVICE NOTE:	The system was compliant when installed, but does not conform to latest regulations. Noted on latest certificate. Clarification received from Bacon Group to accommodate Ecclesiastical advice to test only every 2.5 years.

Combustible materials

Have all been removed	Yes, as far as practicable. Flammable items eg. Tapers, matches and lighters kept locked in office.
Are all exits clear of combustible materials	There is some paper information near the main entrance for visitors, but limited in quantity. In the outer choir vestry there are some choir robes, but they are set back from the exit route. Items now in

	suitcases. The choir vestry also houses the electrics for the visual/audio system.
Contractor and building works	This will be dealt with on a case by case basis and in liaison with the contractors and their own risk assessments.

Fire Protection Arrangements

Are there a suitable number of exits?	Yes – main door and choir vestry
Do they open in the direction of escape?	Main door – yes Choir vestry – 3 doors Inner door – yes Middle door – no Outer door – no
Can doors be opened easily?	Yes
Distances to exit routes?	From front pew of congregation to main exit is c. 14m From vicar's choir seat to vestry final exit door is c. 14m 2 exit routes needed and this enables occupants to turn their back on a fire if one exit route blocked (applies in services only)
Are exit routes protected from fire and kept clear?	Main entrance route clear, but two noticeboards, timber frame ceiling and plastic crate in the porch area. The crate can be moved easily, but the noticeboards are fixed to the porch structure. Choir vestry route clear, but choir robes on one side of exit and set slightly back in a recess.
Are exits suitable for persons with disabilities?	Main exit – yes Choir vestry – no. It has steps between the main and outer vestries, plus steps leading to the outside. Therefore not suitable for wheelchair users or those who have difficulty with steps unless assisted.
Are emergency escape lights installed?	Yes Contractor: CES Last full test: 2.12.25 Next full test: 2.12.26
Are regular checks done on the emergency lighting?	Yes. Monthly by Church Wardens, annually by competent contractor
Are fire exit signs displayed?	No It is deemed the users of the church are sufficiently familiar with the layout that they will not need further direction. This will be reviewed for special events.
Are fire safety signs and fire notices displayed?	Yes
Do fire extinguishers have all the necessary signage?	Yes with one exception in the basement and this will be removed at next review.

Fire detection, warning and extinguisher equipment

Do we have a fire alarm?	No
Describe arrangements for giving warning of fire	Shout “Fire”
Do we have sufficient fire extinguishers	Yes – 4 x CO2 3 x Foam 1 x dry powder. See fire plan for locations.
When was the last review of extinguishers	Feb 26 Fire blanket recommended.

Fire safety management

Is there a drawing of the building	Yes – posted on noticeboard
Do we carry out fire drills?	To be initiated in Spring/Summer 2026
Can we involve the school to simulate an event	Use the school – one off only. Possibly in Autumn 2026
Is there fire safety training for nominated persons	Being initiated in March 2026

Record Keeping

Are there records of emergency lighting tests?	Yes for annual and monthly.
Fire alarm tests	N/A
Evacuation drills	Will be maintained when initiated
Fire safety training	Will be maintained when initiated

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

OCCUPATION

How your building is used by people
We have a regular congregation of 40-50 people who know the building well. The area is non-smoking. We have sidespeople who will take on the role of fire wardens. Our prime concern is the safety of people. Sidespeople check the numbers attending a service including all choristers and officials before the service starts. We have a number of people who work in the church during the week with various volunteer activities.

Fire Detection
There is no fire detection system in the church. We are primarily concerned with people safety and believe a fire would be likely detected by someone smelling this or seeing smoke, then raising the alarm.

Escape
Services: The main body of the church is one large open area with no corridors or risk of congestion and the door providing the principal means of escape to the outside is clearly visible. People in the nave would exit through the main door. The choir, sanctuary and transept would leave by the choir vestry door. This assumes both exits are available. Non-service periods. At all other times the only exit is via the main entrance. Due to the lofty nature of the main body of the church there is a large open area where smoke will collect thus increasing the potential time to allow for evacuation. On a normal service there would be 40-50 people, but for major services it can be up to 220.

Fire Load
The fire load in the main body of the church is low and comprises in the main fixtures and fittings constructed from hardwoods which are difficult to ignite or sustain combustion. Whilst candles are used in the altar area of the church, they are clearly visible, kept away from combustible materials and there is little risk of a fire either starting or developing undetected. We have electrical equipment (sound system) which is tested in accordance with requirements. The main equipment is housed in the choir vestry and secondary equipment is located at the back of the nave. There are virtually no combustible linings that would aid the risk of fire spread.

ARRRANGEMENTS FOR FIRE SAFETY

Emergency Lighting
Emergency lighting is tested monthly by a Church Warden and annually by a competent contractor.

Manual and automatic fire alarm
In view of the nature of the building and its use as detailed above we consider there is no need for a manual or automatic fire alarm system. We have decided that we are seeking to protect people rather than buildings.

Exit Doors
We have concluded that with our regular services and the fact that people are familiar with the church, there is no need to alter the opening of the doors or provide fire exit signage. In the event someone needs assistance we have sidespeople who will assist.

Major Events – weddings, concerts, funerals
We do consider, however, that signage and other measures may required for major services and events when the church might be occupied by persons other than our normal congregation. In these circumstances, the following may be put in place: All external exit doors will be unlocked. All external exit doors will be deemed to be fire exit doors and will have the appropriate fire exit sign placed above them in accordance with The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. Where a door is not visible from the main body of the church, such as an external door from a vestry, the appropriate sign will be displayed showing the route to the door. The priest and verger will take on the roles of fire wardens and will assist with guiding attendees out of the church by nearest available fire exits and then guide people to the designated assembly point. Acting Fire Wardens should check that anyone with disabilities who require assistance to evacuate, such as wheelchair users, do have someone who can assist them and are located in a part of the church closest to a door with the appropriate access and egress. Torches on mobile phones should be used if necessary. At the start of the service or event, an announcement will be made setting out the arrangements for evacuation. A senior person will be nominated to make the announcement to evacuate if required and to follow the directions of the stewards.

On making an evacuation announcement, each steward/usher will ensure that doors are open and held back.

A safe place away from the building will be designated as an assembly point

Training

A list will be maintained of all those who are nominated to undertake fire warden duties. This will comprise:

Churchwardens
Sidespersons
Clergy
Verger

For normal services, churchwardens and sidespersons will undertake day-to-day fire warden duties. For special services and events, arrangements will be as per the arrangements above.

School services – designated staff.

All those with fire warden responsibilities will receive training in their duties when first appointed and every three years thereafter. Training will include the following:

How to raise the alarm and contact the fire service
Location and use of fire extinguishers
How to evacuate the church
How to help with the evacuation of persons with disabilities
The location of the Assembly Point
The signage that is required for major services and events, where it is kept and how it is fixed in place
A knowledge of the Fire Action Notice and where they should be located

Record Keeping

A Log Book will be maintained noting the following:
Dates of fire extinguisher inspection and maintenance visits
Dates of boiler maintenance visits
Dates of fixed electrical system inspections and tests
Dates of portable appliance testing (PAT)
Dates of lightning conductor system inspections and tests
Dates of training
Dates of evacuation drills

ACTION PLAN

Schedule of actions to be taken as a result of our fact-finding exercise in order to maintain our risk as low as possible and to meet our Fire Safety Management Plan.

Action to be taken	Target completion Date	Responsible Person
Fire procedures and plans to be reviewed	31.1.26	Church Wardens
Training of PCC members and sidespeople	31.3.26	Church Wardens
Maintain records of training	31.3.26	Church Wardens
Review of arrangements for large and special services or events	28.2.26	Church Wardens
Fire Drill	Spring/Summer 2026	Church Wardens
Monthly emergency light testing Annual emergency light test	Ongoing 2.12.26	Church Wardens Electrical Contractor
Portable appliance testing and frequency	Testing 2.12.25 Frequency 5 yearly	Electrical Contractor
Provision of one fire blanket	30.1.26	Church Wardens
Basic signage during cleaning periods to warn of trailing cables	Ongoing	Cleaning Team (sign to be provided)