

Our Church Risk Assessment

Name of church:

St Martin's Church, North Nibley

Date(s) assessment carried out:

16th March 2026

Address:

Church Lane
North Nibley
Dursley
GL11 6DJ

(National Electricity database has postcode as GL11
6DL)

Date review of assessment required:

Signed*:

J Hay

How we carried out the risk assessment

1. First of all, we looked at information produced by Ecclesiastical Insurance Group to help us understand where hazards could occur in our church. This included their Health and Safety Made Simple Guide, the introduction to this template, and the guidance provided on their website at www.ecclesiastical.com/healthandsafety. We also looked at relevant information provided by the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk
2. We discussed if anyone could remember if there had ever been any accidents in the past.
3. We then discussed if any other users of the church or anyone who had done work for the church had reported any concerns regarding health and safety.
4. We then walked around the church, the grounds and any other buildings we are responsible for and noted anything that might cause harm. We considered how accidents might happen and how serious the outcome of those might be. We noted if there were any precautions in place or any additional ones we could take. If it was possible to eliminate the risk entirely, we did this as soon as we could. This was based on what we had learned from the information we had reviewed above (note one).
5. We also considered any hazards presented by other activities, such as festivals, concerts or other events including tower tours and fetes. Where these were to be held, we agreed that we would review health and safety precautions before holding the event.
6. We recorded the findings of our assessment using this template.
7. We communicated the findings to all our employees and volunteers, including anyone new who joins us.
8. We have put the risk assessment into practice, making sure that each identified action is progressed and noting when each one is completed on this template.
9. We will review and update our risk assessments where we suspect they are no longer valid.

*Designated member of the PCC with responsibility for health and safety.

Area assessed:

1. The inside of the church

Internal areas of the church normally open to the public (for example, nave, aisles, porches, balconies, etc.).

Who might be harmed?

Anyone visiting, participating, working. Separate risk assessments & procedures are required for large events

Members of the congregation, employees, volunteers, visitors, clergy, in fact anyone visiting the church.

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Trips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worn or unfixed carpet edges, rugs or doormats Trailing wires, cables or leads Worn, damaged or uneven steps or stairs Poor lighting Missing or defective handrails Variations in the level of floors (for example, ramps) Restricted access including doorway widths Other. 	Risk <input type="checkbox"/>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ramp in place for step at main entrance. Internal 'steps' exist to pew platforms and choir area / altar – accept – those who have to stay in a wheelchair can safely sit in the aisle and communion be taken to them Cable covers available for use when required Daught lobby at main doorway has 'straight on' double doors which are opened when necessary. 	In planned re-ordering, we will add power point to reduce the incidence of cable crossing access areas	Churchwarden	With re-ordering – time unpredictable!	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Slips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smooth floor surfaces Cleaning activity making floors slippery (for example, wet mopping, use of polishes, etc.) Wet or contaminated floors from poor maintenance (for example, leaking roofs) Spillages of food or drink (particularly in kitchen areas) Walk-in contaminant from adverse weather (for example, mud, rainwater, etc.) Other. 	Risk <input type="checkbox"/>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> External porch and aisle floors are tiled so slippery when wet. Cleaners use signs after washing floors Floors are generally cleaned weekly and ad hoc as necessary 				<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Falls From Height:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When changing lightbulbs • When cleaning or decorating • When putting up decorations or displays • Inadequately guarded balconies or other areas at height • Fragile ceiling material where work or access is required • Trap doors in bell-ringing chambers • Damaged ladders, stepladders or other access equipment • Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1 Most lightbulbs are at high level and these are only changed using suitable ladders / access and never by anyone on their own. 2 It is necessary usual to stand on a chair when lighting candles on the chandelier – we accept this providing a sturdy chair is used, the person concerned is suitably fit and is not on their own 3 Access equipment is always checked before use. If damage is found, it is reported and the item is marked and set aside until repaired or removed 4 The bell ringing platform has a sturdy glass screen to prevent falls and the trap door is always closed for ringing</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Fire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accumulations of combustible waste • Accumulations of flammable materials • Blocked or obstructed exit routes • Locked escape doors • Portable heaters • Votive candles • Matches • Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1 No waste is stored in the church other than in the waste bin which is emptied fortnightly to tie in with council refuse collection 2 Apart from timber pews and structure, the main flammable item is paper in the form of booklets and toilet paper / hand towels. The former are mainly stored in the vestry and the latter in cupboards / shelves under the tower. No additional precautions deemed necessary 3 By far the best exit is the main door. The west door is accessed via the under -tower area and has several steps leading up to it. It is bolted from the inside, but has no lock. It opens inwards, The external door by the vestry also opens inwards and is narrow with a narrow passage leading to it. It has a mortice lock and a key is kept in the adjacent vestry The main door has an automatic lock with proximity / touch override and manual override switch. 4 Candles are never left unattended and we have a special method statement for use with services such as Christingle when members of the congregation hold candles 5 Portable heaters are electric and rarely used, but never left unattended and are regularly inspected 6 The main problem with matches is</p>	<p>For 'normal services' (usual average attendance 15) we do not open the tower or vestry external doors. When we have larger numbers – with people unfamiliar with the church, we will announce the exits at the beginning and appoint stewards for each to ensure they are opened if necessary</p>	<p>Churchwarden /delegate and officiating minister</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

		getting them to light in the damp! They are stored in the (locked) vestry 7 Fire extinguishers are provided and serviced / inspected annually by a professional company DO WE ACTUALLY NEED A SEPARTE FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT?? IS THER MORE???					
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Electricity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faulty or damaged fixed wiring Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors Other. 	Risk	Fixed installation is professionally inspected every 5 years Portable electrical equipment is inspected before use and PAT tested every couple of years. Any items in suspect condition are removed from use until checked / repaired/ disposed of				<input type="checkbox"/>	
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What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
Gas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defective or poorly maintained gas boilers or pipework Other. 	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No Gas on the premises				<input type="checkbox"/>	

<p>Work Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defective or poorly maintained power tools (for example, vacuum cleaners, floor polishers etc.) Defective or poorly maintained hand tools (for example, garden shears, hammers, etc.) Other. 	Risk	See electrical equipment.				<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Asbestos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In insulation, lagging or fire protection In wall and roof linings In organ blowers In motor housings Other. 	Risk	<p>Asbestos in the organ blower box has been removed, but we know it is still within the reservoir. The organ has been taken out of use. Any work to it in the future will only be done after the involvement of a licensed contractor.</p> <p>We do not believe there is any other asbestos on the premises but are always alert to the possibility. If suspected, a test by a licensed company will be organised</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Glazing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-safety glass in doors, partitions or floors Other. 	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

<p>Hazardous Substances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning products (for example polish, drain cleaner, etc.) • Other. 	<p>Risk</p>	<p>Only standard domestic products are used and the precautions observed. They are stored in cupboard / shelf under the tower</p>				
<p>Manual Handling (lifting or carrying):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulky or unwieldy furniture • Heavy audio visual or computer equipment • General rubbish that may include breakages (for example, glass) • Other. 	<p>Risk N/A</p>	<p>Nothing required in routine operation. We know that we need to be aware</p>	<p>Proposed large TV screen will be on a wheeled stand</p>		<p>Churchwarden as part of proposed re-ordering</p>	
<p>MARTYN'S LAW</p> <p>Terrorism incident</p>	<p>Risk</p>	<p>To get 200 people in to the church is a real squeeze and would involve additional chairs. This would be incredibly rare and fire precautions would require all exits to be open</p> <p>EVACUATION As for fire</p> <p>INVACUATION / LOCKDOWN The church is only one space so this is incredibly unlikely. The Tower door would need to be bolted and the vestry external door locked with a key (kept in the vestry which is unlocked during services)</p> <p>COMMUNICATION The PA system is likely to be on and available, but a loud voice would also be effective</p> <p>TRAINING AND AWARENESS</p>	<p>The main door is electronically locked and could not be locked in a hurry. There is key to the mortice lock in the vestry, but the door is not strong. Internal bolts would provide extra security but it is deemed to be beyond reasonable to install them</p>			

		Would form part of the risk assessment for a large event, but awareness by the PCC members should suffice						
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Area assessed:

2.

Churchyard

Outside areas of our church (for example, towers, tower roofs and other high levels, other outbuildings, churchyard, car park, etc.).

Who might be harmed?

Anyone visiting or passing through. This does not include any organised activities for which separate assessment should be made


Members of the congregation, employees, volunteers, visitors, clergy, in fact anyone visiting the church.

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Trips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven footpaths • Damaged paving stones and slabs • Worn, damaged or uneven steps • Gravestones, kerbs or ledger stones causing obstruction • Protruding tree roots and undergrowth • Poor lighting • Missing or defective handrails • Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1 Main paths. Generally good condition although the path from the main gate is narrowing due to failure of surfacing at the edges. Moss and grass which occurs in patches is treated at irregular intervals.</p> <p>2 The two side entrances both have steps and are best avoided by those who struggle with them.</p> <p>3 There are automatic lights on the path from the main gate and in / outside the external porch.</p> <p>4 The rest of the churchyard is managed for diversity and is 'rough' with gravestones and various trip hazards. This should be no surprise and we do live in a country area!</p>	<p>The path to the Frog Lane gate could do with overgrowing grass removing from the edges before they deteriorate like the main path.</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>	

<p>Slips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor drainage of footpaths Growth of algae or moss Accumulations of wet leaves or loose materials Inadequate precautions for adverse weather (for example snow, ice, etc.) Walk-in contaminant from adverse weather (for example mud, rainwater, etc.) Other. 	Risk	<p>1 Paving slabs near the toilet can become slippery. Warning notices are in place and moss / growth is treated at intervals. Sand is spread when deemed necessary</p> <p>2 In winter, main paths are checked before services and salt is spread when necessary.</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	
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What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Headstones, Tombs and Monuments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaged monuments Displaced headstones Other. 	Risk <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Inspected as part of the quinquennial inspection and when carrying out maintenance such as clearing ivy. Any at risk of falling are laid down				<input type="checkbox"/>	

<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Falls from Height:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access requiring the use of ladders, hatches, sloping roofs, etc. • Restricted access widths around spires • Inadequate protection afforded by parapets • Unprotected roof lights or other fragile roofing material • Low parapeting or castellations along the tops of external walls • Damaged ladders, stepladders or other access equipment • Inadequate temporary edge protection (such as guard rails and toe boards) • Other. 	<p>Risk</p>	<p>1 The biggest risk in the churchyard, but one of which all need to be aware. Much of the perimeter is at a height above the road and has no protection. Common sense needs to prevail as no access here is necessary other than for maintenance in which case those involved must be made aware of the risks.</p> <p>2 The is also a steep drop down to the church on the south side and similar comments apply.</p> <p>3 Contractors carrying out work at high level on the building must have their own procedures</p>					
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What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Tower Tours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowded tours • Inadequate numbers of stewards • Inadequate emergency evacuation procedures • Unauthorised access to areas not on the tour (for example, roofs) • No means of communication between stewards • Inadequate safety briefing for those on the tour • Restricted access (such as, doorway widths, height restrictions or other projections) • Other. 	<p>N/A</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>We do not do these. A specific risk assessment will be made should we do so in the future</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Trees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damaged or displaced trees • Protruding tree roots • Diseased trees • Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1 The Parish Council have just had them inspected by a professional and intends to carry out the recommendations. There is no immediate risk. 2 Inspections will be repeated at intervals. Protruding roots as noted under 'trips'</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Car Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance and exits not clearly marked • Poor lighting • Potholes • Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1 County Council owned and any defects will be reported to them. This is a small parking area outside the gate taking half a dozen cars. 2 Reserved signs are put up for the disabled when expected for large services such as funerals</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Electricity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faulty or damaged fixed wiring Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Fixed wiring is included in the 5 yearly inspection. No external sockets</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Gas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottles incorrectly sited Pipework damaged Other. 	<p>N/A</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>None used</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Work Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defective or poorly maintained power tools (for example, lawnmowers, strimmers, etc.) Defective or poorly maintained hand tools (for example, garden shears, hammers, etc.) Other. 	<p>Risk</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1 Grass cutting is generally by a contractor. Some mowing by individuals using their own equipment. 2 'Work parties' clearing the church yard are occasionally held - helpers bring their own equipment</p>				<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Hazardous Substances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance products (for example, petrol, liquefied petroleum gas, etc.) • Horticultural products (for example, pesticides, weedkillers, fertilisers, etc.) • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Petrol may be used by contractors.</p>	<p>Any weedkillers etc are brought by individual from home and used in accordance with instructions (although we do use washing powder to effectively kill moss</p>			<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Other:</p>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Other:</p>	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Area assessed:

3.

Church hall.

Who might be harmed?

Members of the congregation, volunteers, employees, visitors, clergy, in fact anyone visiting the church hall. This will include groups who rent or use the hall for their own activities such as mother and toddler groups, cubs and brownies, keep fit classes, etc.

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Trips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worn or unfixed carpet edges, rugs and doormats • Trailing wires, cables or leads • Worn, damaged or uneven steps or stairs • Poor lighting • Missing or defective handrails • Variations in the level (for example, ramps) • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Slips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth floor surfaces • Cleaning activity making floors slippery (for example, wet mopping, use of polishes, etc.) • Wet or contaminated floors from poor maintenance (for example, leaking roofs) • Spillages of food or drink, (particularly in kitchen areas) • Walk-in contaminant from adverse weather (for example, mud, rainwater, etc.) • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Falls from Height:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When changing lightbulbs • When cleaning or decorating • When putting up decorations or displays • From balconies or other areas at height • Fragile ceiling material where work or access is required • Damaged ladders, stepladders or other access equipment • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Fire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accumulations of combustible waste • Accumulations of flammable materials • Blocked or obstructed exit routes • Locked escape doors • Portable heaters • Votive candles • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Electricity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faulty or damaged fixed wiring • Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment • Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<input type="checkbox"/>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Gas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defective or poorly maintained gas boilers Faulty portable gas heaters Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Food Preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defective cooking equipment Unsecured or poorly positioned hot water boilers Unclean food preparation areas Inadequate washing facilities Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Asbestos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In insulation, lagging or fire protection In wall and roof linings In organ blowers In motor housings Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

What could cause harm?	Tick here if risk or N/A	Existing precautions in place	Additional precautions required	Who needs to take action?	When does this need to be completed by?	Tick when completed	Completion date
<p>Glazing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-safety glass in doors, partitions or floors • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Hazardous Substances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning products (for example, polish, drain cleaner, etc.) • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Manual Handling (lifting or carrying):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulky or unwieldy furniture (for example tables, chairs, etc.) • Heavy audiovisual computer equipment • General rubbish that may include breakages (for example, glass) • Other. 	<p>Risk <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>					<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Want to know more?

Other useful health and safety information is available at

www.ecclesiastical.com/healthandsafety

Note: if you are in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man, then regional variations might apply. In this instance, you should check the guidance provided by the Enforcing Agency for your region. This will be freely available on their website.

Policy cover queries

For queries about your policy cover, call our specialist church team on **0345 777 3322** (Monday to Friday 8am – 6pm, excluding bank holidays) or email us at **churches@ecclesiastical.com**.

Alternatively, please visit **www.ecclesiastical.com/church**.

This guidance is provided for information purposes and is general and educational in nature. It should not be used as a substitute for taking professional advice on specific issues and should not be taken as providing legal advice on any of the topics addressed.



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