



Health & Safety Policy

November 2024

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, **Strongpoint** (Registered Charity: 1191403) refers to the Trustees, Senior Leadership Team and officers, of Strongpoint/Chowdene Church.

Strongpoint/Chowdene Church meets primarily at:

- Chowdene Chapel, 660 Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE9 6JA and,
- Any additional activities may also take place at other locations as appropriate.

Current activities of the church include regular church services, mid-week activities, youth and children's activities, and outreach projects within the local area, all aimed at sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Strongpoint is committed to ensuring the safety of all employees, volunteers, congregation members, visitors, and anyone who may use the church facilities or attend activities organised by the church.

As an employer and custodian of premises, **Strongpoint** adheres to the requirements of health and safety law, particularly the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, which mandates a written health and safety policy for organisations with five or more employees.

General Statement of Policy

It is **Strongpoint's** policy to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that church activities are conducted safely and do not pose a risk to the health of employees, volunteers, congregation members, or visitors. This policy will be in accordance with good practice, and relevant statutory provisions.

Strongpoint will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective, and any decisions made will have due regard for it. Health and safety matters will be reviewed at appropriate intervals and the effectiveness of the policy monitored. Amendments will be made when deemed necessary.

It is the duty of each employee and volunteer to take personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be communicated to all employees and volunteers, and efforts will be made to ensure everyone understands their role in its implementation.

Responsibilities

The Trustees and Senior Leadership Team

The Trustees and Senior Leadership Team have overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented and maintained. The current Trustees and Senior Leadership are:

- Chris Suddes (Trustee/ Treasurer)
- Stuart Hann (Trustee)
- Audrey Wood (Trustee)
- Andrew Latimer (Trustee)
- June Allport (Trustee)
- Paul Oliver (Co-Leader)
- Tim Crichton (Co-Leader)
- Sarah Motsi (Co-Leader)

They are responsible for:

- Ensuring the standards set in this policy are followed.
- Ensuring health and safety issues are addressed and rectified promptly.
- Ensuring that only competent persons carry out necessary repairs, inspections, and tests.
- Investigating, recording, and reporting accidents when necessary.
- Keeping up to date with relevant health and safety matters.
- Setting a personal example regarding health and safety practices.

Day-to-Day Responsibilities

The following individuals have day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy:

- Leadership team,
- Andrew Motsi - Operations Manager,
- Chris Suddes - Head of Digital Communication,
- Mariam Browne - Head of Social Media and Communications/ Head of Children's Ministry,
- June Allport - Safeguarding

They are responsible for:

- Ensuring all employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Consulting employees and volunteers about health and safety issues.
- Ensuring risk assessments are completed and precautions implemented.
- Providing necessary training and information.
- Investigating and addressing hazards or complaints promptly.
- Ensuring the policy is reviewed annually or after an incident.
- Setting a personal example regarding health and safety.

Employees and Volunteers

Employees and volunteers must cooperate with the implementation of this policy and take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others while on church premises or during church-related activities. They are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding the policy and adhering to its requirements.
- Taking necessary precautions to protect themselves and others.
- Reporting any hazards or damage to the Head of Facilities or Senior Leadership Team.
- Attending necessary training and reporting any accidents.
- Using equipment and resources properly and not misusing anything provided for health and safety purposes.

General Health & Safety Arrangements

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be carried out to identify any risks that may affect employees, volunteers, or visitors and what actions are required to mitigate those risks. These will be reviewed regularly and updated when necessary. Copies of risk assessments will be available upon request.

Information and Training

Relevant information and training will be provided for employees, volunteers, and contractors to ensure they understand and can implement the health and safety measures required. A record of training will be maintained.

First Aid

First aid facilities will be available at the church building and other locations where events or activities are held.

- At 660 Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, the first aid kit is in the **kitchen**
- A first aid kit is also located **lift lobby** of the main church hall
- A first aid kits may be available at external venues as needed.

The church will maintain a list of trained First Aiders and their contact details. In the absence of a trained First Aider, emergency services should be contacted by dialling 999 if there is a serious injury or illness.

The person responsible for First Aid arrangements at Strongpoint is Andrew Motsi.

Accident Reporting

All accidents, injuries, or incidents should be reported using the church's accident book. Serious accidents will be reported to the enforcing authority as per the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Monitoring and Record Keeping

Periodic checks will be made to ensure health and safety measures remain effective. Records of inspections and safety checks will be kept.

Contractors

Contractors working for Strongpoint will be asked to provide proof of their own health and safety policies and appropriate insurance.

Specific Arrangements

- **Asbestos Management:** Strongpoint will assess and manage any asbestos risks in its buildings and provide relevant information to contractors.
- **Building Safety:** Regular inspections will be conducted, and defects repaired promptly. Temporary measures will be implemented where necessary to prevent danger.
- **Electrical Systems:** All electrical systems and equipment will be maintained to prevent risk, with any defects promptly addressed.
- **Fire Safety:** Fire risk assessments will be completed for each building, and precautions will be implemented accordingly.
- **Heating Systems:** All heating systems will be maintained and checked annually by competent personnel.

Working Alone

A separate **Pastoral Visit and Lone Working** Policy has been developed and is available to employees and volunteers via the church website.

Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary, particularly following any incidents or significant changes in legislation.