

Ottery St Mary Parish Church Risk Assessment

Event:	Generic
Responsibility:	Ottery St Mary Church PCC
Date approved by the Standing Committee:	19th May 2025
Date ratified by the PCC:	28th May 2025

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Ottery St. Mary has a responsibility to ensure a safe environment for all people who use the church or for people who receive support under the auspices of the PCC, as well as for those who act on behalf of the church.

The following are the hazards identified in church and the mitigating actions that you must be aware of.

Element of risk	Description of Hazard	Mitigating Action(s)
Steps	North porch Tall step up/down. No handrail	None possible.
	Ambulatories Several steps	Handrails provided. Lighting to be improved 2025. All step edges painted white.
	Chancel/choir 7 separated steps: no handrails	Stewards positioned to help the frail and unsteady at services when the high altar is used.
Other trip hazards	Sound system wires Trailing wires	Protected by flat ducting when crossing walkways.
	Uneven floors Choir stalls platform (esp on right hand side access to light switch)	None attempted but hazard notice on welcome board.
	Pew platforms 50mm lip	Pew platforms by shop and west door marked with red and white tape.
	Lady chapel	None attempted

	Uneven ledger stones	
Refreshment area	Heating water: burns Risk of scalds and other accidents related to hot drinks, kettles etc.	Ensure those serving are fit and capable for the role. First Aid kit available in kitchen area (top drawer of cupboard range – clearly labelled).
	Spillages and slip hazard	Mop available in cleaners’ cupboard. Use yellow signs to indicate wet floors
Preparation and serving of refreshments	Risk of a breach of food safety guidance resulting in contamination of food/drink Food items being transported and stored inappropriately with no reference to the length of travel time, temperature or the use by date; allergic reaction.	<p>A designated person(s) must be responsible for the purchasing of items and storing them safely in their home or in the church at the correct temperature and location for the item. Guidance can be sought from the H&S Lead or online from the Food Standards Agency: https://www.food.gov.uk/food-safety.</p> <p>All catering volunteers should be aware of basic food hygiene.</p> <p>Volunteer caterers may bring food cooked at home to church for serving to the attendees, but it should have been cooked, stored and transported using the above Government food safety guidance.</p> <p>Chilled items, such as milk should be transported in as short a space of time as possible or in a cool bag if the product cannot be kept at a minimum of 8 degrees Celsius. Chilled items must be stored in a fridge set at no more than 5 degrees Celsius.</p> <p>Opened milk, kept in its container and stored in a fridge, may be kept and used for 3 days.</p> <p>Milk that has been poured out of its container and served in a jug must be thrown away.</p> <p>A notice about allergens and ingredients must be clearly displayed.</p>
Moving equipment/furniture	Chairs	Trolley provided.
	Altar	Requires 2 people and safe lifting.
	Staging	Requires multiple people.
	Altar rails	Requires 2 people. Should be stored upside-down.
	Tables	Care needed to ensure locking mechanisms in place.

	Pews	Requires 2 people and safe lifting
	Font lid	Use counterbalance (requires tall person)
Lone working	Planning to be alone in church: falling ill or having an accident, encountering fire, finding yourself alone with a child	<p>Ensure that you have a mobile phone with you that is on, charged, has credit and carry it with you.</p> <p>In the event of an emergency or feeling unsafe in church there is a personal alarm in the drawer of the welcome desk which when pressed will set off the main church alarm.</p> <p>Ensure that someone knows where you are and when you expect to leave.</p> <p>Ensure that you know where to find the first aid kits</p> <p>Ensure that you are familiar with the procedures for dealing with fire</p> <p>Do not plan to be alone with children or young people. However, if you should find yourself in this situation, it is important that another adult is made aware immediately. You should also assess the risks involved in sending the child or young person home, against the risks and vulnerability of being alone with them.</p> <p>If an incident occurs – even if it is considered a minor incident – tell a Churchwarden, Incumbent and/ or Safeguarding Representative (PSR) know as soon as possible in order that the appropriate risk assessment and follow-up action can be taken.</p>
Safeguarding	Disclosure: verbal or being in distress	<p>Response may vary depending on whether the person is known or not. Other factors may be gender and level of distress.</p> <p>If in a lone working situation the best course of action may be to leave the church and contact the PSR or incumbent.</p> <p>In all instances any disclosure must be reported to the PSR or incumbent.</p>
	Building blind spots: Dorset aisle, toilets, ambulatories and Lady Chapel	Users are encouraged to consider the use of stewards to man these areas (esp. Dorset aisle when children might be using the toy area).

	Building H&S and safeguarding risk Utility staircases, tower rooms and clock chamber	Doors are marked as having no public access. Those entering these spaces with permission are required to adhere to H&S procedures and to be mindful of body space in enclosed areas.
Fire	Risk of injury or death	<p>Ensure a churchwarden (steward from external hirers) does a final sweep of the building in the event of an evacuation.</p> <p>Ensure all persons with responsibility are clear about exits and muster points, including exiting via the vicar's vestry and the key placed in the west door.</p> <p>Check the building fire risk assessment has been shared with all persons with responsibility.</p> <p>Ensure all persons with responsibility know where fire extinguishers are located, and helpers know how to use them.</p>

If you are booking the church and have identified additional event specific hazards, please list them in the table below with your proposed mitigating actions

Element of risk	Description of Hazard	Mitigating Action(s)

Please accept this risk assessment by signing below and then return it to the Church Administrator.

Signed:

Name:

Date: