



Keeping People Safe

CHURCH HEALTH & SAFETY TOOLKIT

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

 ecclesiastical

Our Church Risk Assessment

Name of church:

Saint Mary's Church

Address:

Main Street
Co Dublin

Date(s) assessment carried out:

28/06/2019

Date review of assessment required:

28/06/2021

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.ie/risk management](http://www.ecclesiastical.ie/risk%20management). We also looked at relevant information provided by the Health and Safety Authority at www.hsa.ie
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 churchyard the graveyard 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 fêtes. 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We will review and update our risk assessments where we suspect they are no longer valid.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.

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

Area assessed:

1. Inside our Church

Who might be harmed:

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

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
Trips: ▪ 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 of floors (for example, ramps) ▪ Restricted access including doorway widths ▪ Other.	Risk ☒ N/A ☐	Carpets in good condition, properly fixed down. No trailing leads or cables noted. All steps/stairs in good condition. Good lighting levels. Regularly maintained Handrails provided.	Replace worn doormat in porch. Inspect floor coverings periodically.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	
Slips: ▪ 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 ☒ N/A ☐	No smooth floor surfaces noted. No polishes or wet-mop cleaning undertaken. Matting provided in entrance porch (see above). There are no kitchen areas.				☐	

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

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
Falls From Height: ▪ When changing lightbulbs ▪ When cleaning or decorating ▪ When putting decorations or displays up ▪ 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.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Adequate, proprietary stepladder available. Stepladder in good condition/checked before use. Stepladder properly stored Users know how to use it safely. Information on use available.	Make periodic checks of stepladder. Keep records of checks made.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	
Fire: ▪ Accumulations of combustible waste ▪ Accumulations of flammable materials ▪ Blocked or obstructed exit routes ▪ Locked escape doors ▪ Portable heaters ▪ Votive candles ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Fire risk assessment done. All actions complete All checks being completed. Records available.				☐	
Electricity: ▪ Faulty or damaged fixed wiring ▪ Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment ▪ Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Fixed wiring inspected/ tested every five years. Completed by a competent electrician. Records of checks made available. Repairs completed by a competent electrician and registered with safe electric.	Implement formal checks of portable equipment. Checks to be made by competent person. Records of checks to be kept.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

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: ▪ Defective or poorly maintained gas boilers or pipework ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Gas boiler is checked/ serviced annually. Completed by Gas Safe engineer. Records are available. No portable heaters used.				☐	
Work Equipment: ▪ 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 N/A ☒ ☐	Equipment seen is in good order.	Implement formal checks (see electricity above).	BA	30/08/2019	☐	
Asbestos: ▪ In insulation, lagging or fire protection ▪ In wall and roof linings ▪ In organ blowers ▪ In motor housings ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐		Find out if there is asbestos in the church. Make and keep an up-to-date record of this. Assess the risk from the material. Prepare a plan for managing any risk. Implement the steps needed. Review and monitor arrangements put in place.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

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
Glazing: ▪ Non-safety glass in doors, partitions or floors ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☐ ☒					☐	
Hazardous Substances: ▪ Cleaning products (for example polish, drain cleaner, etc.) ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Only household products used in the church. User knows how to use products safely. All products are safely stored.	Gloves and eye protection need to be provided and used whenever these products are applied	Volunteers cleaners	30/08/2019	☐	
Manual Handling (lifting or carrying): ▪ Bulky or unwieldy furniture ▪ Heavy audio visual or computer equipment ▪ General rubbish that may include breakages (for example, glass) ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Trolleys available to move heavy objects. Users know how to use the equipment safely. Equipment is checked periodically. Records are kept of the checks made.				☐	

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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
Other:	Risk N/A						
Other:	Risk N/A						
Other:	Risk N/A						

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

Area assessed:

2. Outside our church

Who might be harmed:

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

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

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
Trips: ▪ Uneven footpaths ▪ Damaged paving stones and slabs ▪ Worn damaged or uneven steps ▪ Gravestones, kerbs, ledger stones causing obstruction ▪ Protruding tree roots and undergrowth ▪ Poor lighting ▪ Missing or defective handrails ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Footpath's in good condition. No obstructions noted. Steps in good condition. Handrail provided on steps. All grassed areas are mown on a regular basis.	Lighting defective, bulb to be replaced. Inspect paths periodically.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	
Slips: ▪ 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 N/A ☒ ☐	All drainage gullies are clear. Gritting materials available.	Keep records of checks made. Inspect paths periodically.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	

Risk Assessment (Worked Example)

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
Headstones, Tombs and Monuments: ▪ Damaged monuments ▪ Displaced headstones ▪ Other.	Risk ☒	N/A ☐ All monuments etc. inspected. No defects noted Records are available.				☐	
Falls from Height: ▪ 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 access equipment ▪ Inadequate temporary edge protection (such as, guard rails and toe boards) ▪ Other.	Risk ☒	N/A ☐ Adequate, proprietary stepladder available. Stepladder in good condition/checked before use. Stepladder properly stored. Users know how to use it safely. Information on use available.	Make periodic checks of stepladder. Keep records of checks made.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	
Tower Tours: ▪ 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) ▪ No first aid equipment or personnel	Risk ☒	N/A ☐ All stewards provided with mobile phones and torches, trained in first aid and provided with backpacks of first aid equipment . Maximum number per tour is fixed at 8. 2 stewards provided per tour. Stewards are physically fit and over 18 years. Access to other places at height is restricted. Adequate handrails are provided in the tower.	Check means of raising alarm in an emergency.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	

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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
Trees: ▪ Damaged or displaced trees ▪ Protruding tree roots ▪ Diseased trees ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	All trees inspected. No defects noted Records are available.				☐	
Car Park: ▪ Entrance and exits not clearly marked ▪ Poor lighting ▪ Potholes ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Entrance to car park is clearly marked. Lighting is provided and in working order. Lighting is inspected annually. Records of checks made are available.	Make provision for dealing with ice/snow.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	
Electricity: ▪ Faulty or damaged fixed wiring ▪ Faulty, damaged or unauthorised portable electrical equipment ▪ Faulty or damaged extension cables or adaptors ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐		Implement formal checks of portable equipment. Checks to be made by competent person. Records of checks to be kept.	BA	30/08/2019	☐	

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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: ▪ Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottles incorrectly sited ▪ Pipework damaged ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☐ ☒	No LPG is used at the church.				☐	
Work Equipment: ▪ Defective or poorly maintained power tools (for example, lawnmowers, strimmers, etc.) ▪ Defective or poorly maintained hand tools (for example, garden shears, hammers, etc.) ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☐ ☒	No garden machinery is provided for use.				☐	
Hazard Substances: ▪ Maintenance products (for example, petrol, liquefied petroleum gas, etc.), ▪ Horticultural products (for example, pesticides, weedkillers, fertilisers, etc.) ▪ Other.	Risk N/A ☒ ☐	Only household horticultural products are used. Users know how to use products safely. All products are safely stored. Gloves and masks are provided and used				☐	

Want to know more?

We have produced other useful information to help you get started or simply check the adequacy of what you have already done. All are available at:

www.ecclesiastical.ie/riskmanagement

Information in this document

We have prepared this guide in good faith. The information in it is based on our understanding of current law and practice. Neither Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc nor any of its subsidiaries accept any liability whatsoever for any errors or omissions in this guide that result in injury, loss or damage, including financial loss. It is the responsibility of the Insured or any person to ensure that they comply with their statutory obligations. Any interpretation or implementation of this guide is at the sole discretion of the reader.

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.

Need to contact us?

For further information on health and safety in churches:

**Call our Risk Management on
01 619 0300**

(Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 17:00 – excluding Bank Holidays. We may monitor or record calls to improve our service.)

Or Visit

www.ecclesiastical.ie/riskmanagement



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