

**THE ARCHDIOCESE OF
SAINT ANDREWS & EDINBURGH**

**FIRE SAFETY POLICY: 2023
APPLICABLE TO ALL PREMISES AND ACTIVITIES
WITHIN THE CONTROL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE**

Issued June 2023

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FOREWORD

Dear Friends

Tragic events that have occurred in recent years have shown how devastating the effects of fire can be and should remind us of all of the necessity to take appropriate steps to prevent and mitigate the effects of fire.

The people and communities of our Archdiocese are fortunate to be served by so many dedicated and faithful clergy, supported by the Properties team in our Curia. The need for priestly ministry is as important as ever, as is the need to demonstrate care and respect for every person involved in our local Catholic parishes, schools, religious communities and Church activities.

We believe that every person is created in God's image and likeness and, therefore, is deserving of respect. What we believe is also expressed in our legal and ethical duty to look after everyone's safety, welfare, and health – whenever they are in our care – so that the chance of someone suffering any kind of injury is minimised.

The Archdiocese is required to meet the obligations specified in both civil legislation and Canon law. Under Canon law, the Parish Priest/Parochial Administrator is entrusted with the care of souls within his parish, and this includes all visitors to the parish. Assisted by Parish representatives, it is his duty to ensure that all fire safety matters have been considered and that identified risks have been mitigated in every way possible.

The framework of fire safety support and guidance that follows in this policy document seeks to enable us all, members of the clergy, employees and volunteers, and parishioners, to carry out our duties in the service and protection of others to the highest possible standards.

This fire safety policy document outlines, in detail, the expectations the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh has of all those who work for it, or serve within it, whether as trustees, clergy, employees, volunteers, and parishioners, in all matters relating to fire safety.

I am pleased to launch our Fire Safety Policy: 2023. In so doing, I express my gratitude to everyone involved in supporting the safety from fire of all those working in, or visiting, our churches and premises. I ask that you take to heart the provision expressed in this fire safety policy. We all must take responsibility for this in every aspect of Church life.

Sincerely,

+Leo Cushley
Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Archdiocese of St Andrew's & Edinburgh and its Trustees, believes that ensuring the health and safety of staff, visitors, service users and all relevant persons is essential to our success.

We are committed to:

1. Preventing accidents and work-related ill health.
2. Compliance with statutory requirements as a minimum.
3. Assessing and controlling the risks that arise from our work activities.
4. Providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment.
5. Ensuring safe working methods and providing safe working equipment.
6. Providing effective information, instruction and training.
7. Consulting with employees and their representatives on health and safety matters.
8. Monitoring and reviewing our systems and prevention measures to ensure their effectiveness.
9. Setting targets and objectives to develop a culture of continuous improvement.
10. Ensuring adequate welfare facilities exist throughout our properties.
11. Ensuring adequate resources are made available for health and safety issues, so far as is reasonably practicable.

A Fire Safety Management Policy has been created to ensure the above commitments can be met. Everyone must play their part in the creation of a safe and healthy working environment for all.

Signed: _____

Date _____

. FIRE SAFETY IN DIOCESAN PREMISES

- 2.1 This Fire Safety Policy applies to all premises and activities falling, to any extent, under the control of the Archdiocese. The policy provides the framework by which the Archdiocese and all parishioners of the Archdiocese are expected to undertake their relevant fire safety duties. Details are included in an organogram within Annex A to this policy document.

Fire Safety Legislation

- 2.2 The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (the Act), and the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (the Regulations, together the Legislation) constitute the legislative provisions by which fire safety is controlled in Scotland. The requirements of the Legislation are enforced by The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. A breach of the Legislation is a criminal offence and may result in prosecution.
- 2.3 Fire safety duties required under the Legislation are imposed primarily on “Duty holders”. The Legislation defines the Duty holders in relation to a workplace, as the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his control. In this case, the Trustees are the Duty holders and are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Legislation are met in respect of all of its buildings that fall within the scope of the Legislation.
- 2.4 However, the Legislation also provides that any duties imposed on the Duty holder by Section 53(2) (a) of the Act are also, by virtue of Section 54(2) a of the Act, imposed on, inter alia, any other person who has, to any extent, control of the premises so far as the requirements relate to matters within his control.
- 2.5 As regards parish premises, the duty holders will be those persons having control of the premises including parish clergy and anyone who, under a contract, has responsibility for the safety of the premises (e.g. parish administrator, caretaker).
- 2.6 For other archdiocesan premises, the Director of Property has responsibility for the day-to-day management of fire safety in their buildings may employ other paid members of staff to undertake delegated roles. Such persons may also be considered to be “persons having control of the premises”.

Other Legislation

- 2.7 Under the heading of “other legislation”, the following may also be relevant to the Archdiocesan estate, namely:
- Housing Act 2004;
 - The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015;
 - Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994;
 - The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998;
 - The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended);
 - The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020;
 - Fire Safety Act 2021.

- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006

Supporting guidance

Scottish Government Fire safety guidance for existing non-residential premises

- 2.8 The scope of this guidance means it is likely to be applicable to most archdiocesan buildings given it covers non-residential commercial, assembly, day care and entertainment premises, it does not however cover existing non-residential premises which are considered under separate guidance issued by the Scottish Government (Practical fire safety guidance for existing non-residential premises).

Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standards) (Extension of Criteria) Order 2019

- 2.12 Requires every home to have certain interlinked smoke and heat alarms and is applicable to all residential diocesan premises. A guide to the obligations created by the legislation in respect of smoke and heat alarms can be found on the Scottish government website at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes/>

Fire Risk Assessment

- 2.13 By virtue of Section 53(2) (a) and Section 54(2) (a) of the of the Act, employers and other persons who have control of premises such as clergy are required to ensure an assessment is undertaken of the risks to which employees and relevant persons (i.e. persons within the premises or in the immediate vicinity whose safety would be at risk in the event of a fire) are exposed. This is to ensure that such persons are safe from fire and its effects. This assessment is usually referred to as a “fire risk assessment”, or “FRA”, and must be reviewed regularly, to keep it up to date or where there has been significant change to premises (Regulations 3 (1) and (2) of the Regulations).
- 2.14 The main purpose of the fire risk assessment process is to ensure that a methodical and structured approach is applied to assessing the risk of harm from fire, and the suitability and effectiveness of fire safety measures designed to avoid or mitigate the risk. In this connection, Section 53 (1) and (2) of the Act provides that the Duty holder must:
- a) ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of the employer's employees in respect of harm caused by fire in the workplace; and
 - b) in relation to relevant persons who are not his employees, take such general fire safety measures as in all circumstances it is reasonable for a person in his position to take to ensure the safety of persons in respect of harm caused by fire.

- 2.15 *Fire Safety Measures* are to be implemented on the basis of the considerations outlined in Section 55 (3) of the Act and those considerations are:
- (a) avoiding risks;
 - (b) evaluating risks which cannot be avoided;
 - (c) combating risks at source;
 - (d) adapting to technical progress;
 - (e) replacing the dangerous with the non-dangerous or the less dangerous;
 - (f) developing a coherent overall fire prevention policy which covers technology, organisation of work and the influence of factors relating to the working environment;
 - (g) giving collective fire safety protective measures priority over individual measures; and
 - (h) giving appropriate instructions to employees.

In addition, the requirements of Part 3 Fire Safety of the Regulations must be followed.

- 2.16 The Archdiocesan estate comprises a variety of different types of buildings, the majority of which fall within the scope of the Act. These include:
- Parish churches, halls and offices;
 - The Cathedral, other Assembly Buildings on the Cathedral site.
 - Central administrative offices.
 - Commercial and residential tenanted properties
- 2.17 However, there are also a number of buildings, such as some of the presbyteries, which have no office or public access and which fall outside the scope of the Act but may come within the scope of some, or all, of the other legislation (see paragraphs 2.7-2.12 above).
- 2.18 The operation of Parishes provides unusual challenges that need to be taken into account as part of the risk assessment processes, for example:
- The occupancy of churches will vary between a maximum occupancy for certain services such as Christmas or Easter to a single volunteer engaged in a routine task such as flower arranging or cleaning.
 - Final exit doors signed as emergency exits may need to be secured to prevent access from outside and the possibility of an arson attack. However, whilst the final exit doors may be routinely unlocked as a part of the preparation for services, it is important to consider whether and how they are unlocked at times of low occupancy. It is also important to avoid the need for keys or codes to be used in order to open a fire exit.

- Candles will be in daily use as a matter of routine in all churches. Careful management of candles is required to prevent fires and potentially serious injury or even fatalities. Advice on safe use of candles is issued annually. For further guidance contact the Curial Offices

2.19 In accordance with the wish of the Archdiocese to ensure the safety of all persons who reside in, or have access to, any of its buildings, regardless of their legislative status, the Director of Property on behalf of the Archdiocese, will:

- commission a competent specialist contractor to carry out fire risk assessments of all buildings within the Archdiocese, in order to provide an initial benchmark in respect of the level of compliance of buildings within the Archdiocesan estate and to further establish the level of remedial works required;
- set up a schedule of all buildings within the Archdiocesan estate and arrange the subsequent annual in-house reviews of the initial FRAs;
- maintain an overview, and monitor progress, of remedial works in accordance with the action plans within each of the initial FRAs and subsequent reviews;
- organise subsequent periodic specialist reviews of fire risk assessments at agreed intervals; and
- review/reassess all properties that have material changes undertaken in line with applicable legislation.

Management of Fire Safety

2.20 The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that the fire safety duties imposed on the Duty holder in respect of the undertakings required to meet compliance with the Legislation are diligently met, with the assistance of the COO and relevant Heads of Department, including, primarily, the Head of Property, who has line management responsibility for the health and safety of those within the Archdiocese.

2.21 As regards parish premises, the Duty holder will be those persons having control of the premises including parish clergy and anyone who, under a contract, has responsibility for the safety of the premises (see Section 3 below).

2.22 Those who have responsibility for the day-to-day management of fire safety in the buildings for which they are responsible (including where applicable unoccupied buildings which can be at risk of arson attacks) and, unlike some parishes, may have other paid members of staff who can undertake delegated roles.

2.23 Where relevant premises are occupied under a tenancy, the **Will** co-operate and co-ordinate with the landlord (or other persons concerned) so far as is necessary to enable them to comply with the Legislation (Regulation 21 of the Regulations).

Maintenance

- 2.24 The Duty holder must ensure that the premises and any equipment provided therein in connection with fire safety measures are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair (In accordance with Section 16 of the Regulations). It is important that a planned preventive maintenance schedule is established in order to ensure that all systems and equipment are routinely maintained and serviced as this reduces the likelihood of an accidental fire occurring, although there may be additional risks that will need to be considered.
- 2.25 Although it is not a requirement of the Legislation (unless the Duty holder employs 5 or more people), it is good practice to maintain records of testing and maintenance of equipment and other general fire safety matters. In this regard, records of the following will be maintained, namely:
- test and service records of fire safety provisions e.g. fire detection and alarm systems, emergency escape lighting and firefighting equipment;
 - planned preventive maintenance carried out to prevent fires occurring, e.g. electrical installation tests and gas safety and soundness tests.
 - fire risk assessments and reviews;
 - fire policies and procedures, including evacuation planning.

Contractors

- 2.26 Where contractors are on site, it is the duty of the person with responsibility for the works undertaken by the contractors to ensure that the appropriate level of fire safety is incorporated within any work schedule, contract agreement or risk assessment. Where any work is likely to involve the application of a naked flame, or mechanically induced heat source, a “Hot Work” permit must be acquired and agreed prior to the commencement of such works.
- 2.27 Where any works are likely to impact on the existing fire safety provisions, notification must be communicated to the Archdiocesan Health and Safety Coordinator for consideration.
- 2.28 Contractors will be made aware of the actions they should take in the event of a fire in the area in which they are working or are likely to attend.
- 2.28 All those with responsibility for premises have been directed to guidance on the control of contractors working on Archdiocesan property. That guidance will be found in the arrangements section of the Health & Safety Policy.

Scotland – Additional obligations in respect of smoke and heat alarms for residential properties

- 2.29 By law in Scotland (in particular the legislation referenced in para 2.7 above) every residential home must have:
- one smoke alarm in the living room or the room you use most
 - one smoke alarm in every hallway or landing
 - one heat alarm in the kitchen

All smoke and heat alarms should be mounted on the ceiling and be interlinked. If you have a carbon-fuelled appliance – like a boiler, fire, heater or flue – in any room,

you must also have a carbon monoxide detector in that room, but this does not need to be linked to the fire alarms. A more detailed guide can be found at [Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER PERSONS WITHIN THE ARCHDIOCESE WITH FIRE SAFETY DUTIES

3.1 While primary responsibility for fire safety in respect of premises within the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh rests with the Board of Trustees, the following persons also have responsibility, namely:

- Chief Operating Officer
- Director of Properties;
- Health and Safety Coordinator
- Parish Priests;
- Fire Wardens (Gillis Centre and all church sites only)
- Contractors employed to carry out works within Archdiocesan properties.

3.2 This section sets out the responsibilities of such persons.

Health and Safety Team

3.3 Whilst Parish Priests (or the Director of Property) are responsible for the day-to-day administration of fire safety in their premises, the Archdiocese recognises that the resources they have at their disposal may be limited. In order to address this, the Archdiocese via the Property Team, will ensure that arrangements are made in respect of the maintenance of fire safety provisions to prevent fires occurring and comply with the Legislation; this will include:

- that fire detection and alarm systems are maintained in accordance with the relevant standard, including compliant alarms in every residential home (one smoke alarm in the living room or the room used most, one smoke alarm in every hallway or landing and one heat alarm in the kitchen, all ceiling mounted and interlinked. Where there are also carbon-fuelled appliances – like a boiler, fire, heater or flue – in any room, the carbon monoxide detector);
- that fire-fighting equipment is serviced annually;
- that periodic inspection of metal external staircases and gangways is carried out (where installed);
- that emergency escape lighting and maintained illuminated exit signage are maintained annually in accordance with the relevant standard;
- that fixed electrical installation tests are undertaken as required;
- that all electrical appliances are subject to testing in accordance with the In Service and Testing of Electrical Equipment Code of Practice¹.
- that gas safety and soundness tests are carried out and certificates evidencing these are obtained;
- that routine servicing of heating systems in Archdiocesan and parish buildings is carried out;
- that inspection and testing of lightning protection systems (where installed) is carried out;

¹ IET Code of Practice for In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment. Fifth Edition.

- that, in addition to the quinquennial or condition survey inspections that Parishes are responsible for arranging, the Property Team will arrange fire risk assessments and, thereafter, fire risk assessment reviews for all buildings within the Archdiocese.
- that appropriate fire safety guidance is maintained, developed, and revised as necessary;
- that training and other resources are provided, as necessary, to support the Archdiocese in meeting its responsibilities under the Legislation and this fire safety policy.

Personnel

- 3.4 The Property Department looks after buildings that are not part of the individual parish estate. The Director of Properties / Health & Safety Coordinator is responsible for implementing this fire safety policy and overseeing fire safety matters on a day-to-day basis within these premises.
- 3.5 The Director of Properties may appoint local health and safety representatives to such roles as will assist him/her in carrying out his/her duties should it be necessary in undertaking measures necessary to comply with the Legislation (as envisaged in the Archdiocesan Health and Safety Policy document and in accordance with Section 17 of the Regulations). In such cases, it may be that local health and safety representatives in archdiocesan buildings are likely to be paid members of staff who have other primary roles.
- 3.6 In respect of the premises referred to in paragraph 3.4 above, the Director of Properties is responsible for ensuring that the following are routinely tested and that adequate records are maintained of these tests, namely:
- fire detection and alarm systems (weekly or, in the case of smoke or heat alarms, monthly);
 - emergency escape lighting (monthly);
 - fire exit doors and escape routes operate correctly and are clear from obstructions (weekly);
 - all fire exits are unlocked (whenever buildings are occupied).
- 3.7 The Chief Operating Officer will appoint sufficient Fire Wardens to coordinate any necessary evacuation of the premises.
- 3.8 The Director of Properties, supported by the Health & Safety Coordinator will ensure that members of Archdiocesan staff who have specific responsibilities are given training that is commensurate with their duties. In this regard, the Director of Properties will also ensure that:
- all staff receive training on induction and at regular intervals thereafter, and that records of this training are maintained;
 - adequate records are maintained in relation to the storage and use of any dangerous substances, if present (COSHH & DSEAR HSE?);
 - appropriate statutory licenses are applied for, and renewed where necessary;

- all works undertaken by contractors, relevant to areas of responsibility, are supervised and, where “hot works” are to be carried out, that the appropriate approval is completed;
- the Health and Safety Coordinator is informed of all relevant matters likely to impact on fire safety matters;
- waste, and waste storage, is proactively monitored to ensure that it is stored away from buildings and within designated containers;
- property within their control that is rented, leased, or licensed to a third party, whether for financial consideration or not, is reported to the Property Department and Archdiocesan requirements in respect of the management of such property, inclusive of the administration of the ‘Parish Property Hire Agreement,’ are met.

Parish Priests

- 3.9 The general policy of the Archdiocese is that a parish, as far as possible should manage its own affairs under the leadership of the parish priest. Authority is vested in the Parish Priest pursuant to the Code of Canon Law (Can. 1279 §1), and administration of the parish rests with him. Canon Law distinguishes between ordinary (Can. 1281 §1) and extraordinary (Can. 1281 §2) acts of administration, as referred to in the current Clergy Handbook.
- 3.10 However, the authority of the Parish Priest is limited to the day-to-day management of fire safety, with central support being provided by the Director of Properties and the Health & Safety Coordinator. While the Parish Priest’s primary duty cannot be delegated to others, Parish Priests may, and it is recommended that, they seek to appoint local health and safety representative(s) (as detailed in the archdiocesan Health and Safety Policy) and that such representative(s), who are likely to be volunteers, are given roles to assist the Parish Priests to meet their fire safety duties (in accordance with Section 17 of the Regulations).
- 3.11 Duties of the Parish Priests include, but are not limited to, those set out below. In this regard, Parish Priests will ensure that:
- all staff/employees/volunteers receive training on induction and at regular intervals thereafter and that records of this training are maintained;
 - adequate records are maintained in relation to the storage and use of any dangerous substances, if present (COSHH² & DSEAR³);
 - appropriate statutory licences are applied for, and renewed where necessary, e.g. petroleum licences are required if more than 275 litres are stored (if more than 30 litres are stored but less than 275 litres, the relevant petroleum enforcement authority should be informed in writing);
 - all works undertaken by contractors, relevant to areas of responsibility, are supervised and, where “hot works” are to be carried out, that the appropriate approval is completed;
 - the Health and Safety Coordinator is informed of all relevant matters likely to impact on fire safety matters;

² Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)

³ Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR)

- waste, and waste storage, is proactively monitored to ensure that it is stored away from buildings and within designated containers;
 - any third-party use of any property within their control is reported to the Property Department, including any premises that are rented, leased, or licensed to a third party, whether for financial consideration or not. It will be ensured that Archdiocesan requirements in respect of the management of such property, inclusive of the administration of the 'Parish Property Hire Agreement,' are satisfied.
- 3.12 Parish Priests will also ensure that the following are routinely tested and that adequate records are maintained of these tests, namely:
- fire detection and alarm systems (weekly);
 - emergency escape lighting (monthly);
 - fire exit doors and escape routes operate correctly and are clear from obstructions (weekly);
 - all fire exits are unlocked (whenever buildings are occupied).
 - Evacuation procedures, by way of fire drills (at least annually)

Fire Wardens

- 3.13 It is anticipated that it is unlikely that it will be practicable to attract and appoint fire wardens to support the evacuation of persons attending all, or even some, of the religious services. Accordingly, rather than create a new, specific fire warden role in the parishes, it is recommended that the roles and duties be designed around the liturgical roles of those likely to be present at services and functions. By way of example, in addition to the Parish Priest, the following persons may also be present, namely:
- Assistant priests;
 - Eucharistic ministers;
 - Sacristans;
 - Readers;
 - Passkeepers.
- 3.14 Nevertheless, it must be ensured that, at the time of services and functions, those who assume the above roles will be present and, further, that they have received adequate fire safety training and information to enable them to fulfil their duties.
- 3.15 In some of the larger or more complex buildings/sites, a fire evacuation can be achieved more easily with the support of a team of staff who are routinely familiar with the building. In such premises, fire warden teams chosen from staff who occupy the building can be best utilised to support safe and efficient evacuation procedures.
- 3.16 With regard to training of those undertaking fire warden duties, training can be arranged by the Properties Department, or directly with an assigned fire management company; and includes the need to:
- be familiar with all exit routes from the building in which they normally work and/or the building where they will be carrying out fire warden duties;

- advise others on the location of exit routes;
- draw to the attention of the person with responsibility for the premises (e.g. the Parish Priest, or for the Gillis Centre, the Director of Properties or, if not available, a local health and safety representative) any deficiency or obstruction on these routes;
- indicate the most appropriate exit route and help occupants to locate alternative routes if necessary;
- following an evacuation, instruct personnel outside the building to congregate in the recognized assembly areas and not to re-enter the building until so instructed by a senior Fire and Rescue Service Officer;
- report the successful evacuation of their area of responsibility to the person identified as responsible for evacuation of the building (in some locations, this may be the senior member of staff present while, in the case of most parishes, it will be likely to be the Parish Priest).

4. FIRE SAFETY TRAINING

- 4.1 The Duty holder must ensure that his employees are provided with adequate instruction and fire safety training on the appropriate precautions and actions to be taken by employees in order to safeguard themselves and other relevant persons on the premises (Schedule 2 of the Act and Regulation 20 of the Regulations).
- 4.2 To comply not only with this statutory requirement but also with the requirements of other guidance applicable to certain buildings in the Archdiocese, the COO, together with the Director of Properties, must ensure that all new employees undertake fire safety training as soon as is practicable after commencement of employment and that all employees within their management control receive periodic refresher training.
(Note: induction information relevant to fire safety precautions within the Archdiocese is available from the Health and Safety Team; periodic refresher training should be undertaken for general members of staff at periods not exceeding three years.)
- 4.3 Account must also be taken of circumstances that may impact on fire safety such as the introduction of new work equipment, modern technology, and any new or changed risks, etc. Where young persons (under the age of 18) are employed, account must be taken of their lack of awareness, inexperience and immaturity when assessing work-based tasks and the impact this may have on fire safety arrangements.
- 4.4 All inexperienced staff/employees/volunteers must be instructed in fire safety precautions that are relevant to their workplace or location. Their line manager or Parish Priest is responsible for ensuring that they are advised of the following, namely:
- fire risks in the premises;
 - the general fire precautions in the premises;
 - action in the event of fire;
 - action on hearing the fire alarm signal;
 - method of operation of manual call points;
 - location and use of fire extinguishers;
 - meaning of fire safety signs;
 - means for summoning the fire and rescue service;
 - identity of persons nominated to assist with an evacuation;
 - identity of persons nominated to use fire extinguishing appliances
- 4.5 The unique circumstances and role of the Parish Priest is recognised and the Health and Safety Team will arrange for training to enable them to carry out their fire safety duties. This will be undertaken at Priest induction for new Priests and via regular training for all clergy delivered or arranged by the Health & Safety Team.
- 4.6 In the case of fire wardens, training is also provided or arranged by the Health and Safety Team, as and when deemed necessary, though the maximum period between training should not exceed 3 years. The wardens' training will include safe evacuation and zone clearance procedures, as well as detailed fire safety guidance.

5. EVACUATION PROCEDURES (INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DISABLED PERSONS)

- 5.1 It is important that all Duty holders (including Parish Priests, responsible persons, etc) ensure that they have emergency evacuation plans in place for those buildings under their control and that these are regularly reviewed and kept up to date. It is also particularly important that any emergency fire procedures for such buildings are developed to reflect the circumstances of each individual parish.
- 5.3 In small simple buildings, a fire action notice may be all that is required. However, more complex buildings will necessitate a more comprehensive plan. For such buildings, it may be the case that the plan will need to include procedures in relation to the appointment of fire wardens, or nominated persons who have liturgical roles in the case of churches where religious services are taking place, and their roles and responsibilities in evacuation of those buildings.
- 5.4 Although not always the case, fire evacuation plans may need to include routine opening up and closing down procedures.
- 5.5 In all cases, emergency evacuation plans will need to be appropriate to the building to be evacuated in case of fire. However, the Health and Safety Team can provide guidance in respect of matters to consider when establishing an emergency evacuation plan, such as (but not limited to):
- the time available for evacuation;
 - the likely profile and size of congregations;
 - requirements of any disabled persons who may be present;
 - responsibility for children who may be remote from their parents;
 - where a balcony or gallery is in use, this may need special consideration regarding its evacuation as it could be closer to the likely buildup of smoke in the body of the church;
 - inward opening doors that may require to be stewarded so that they can be opened immediately in case of emergency;
 - the need for secondary security devices fitted to fire exits to be unlocked, dependent upon the use of buildings.
- 5.6 Once evacuation procedures are established, fire drills should be arranged at appropriate intervals for staff and/or volunteers with evacuation duties (and, where necessary, other occupants of buildings) in order to practice and test procedures.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

- 5.7 The Archdiocese seeks to facilitate disabled access to parish and other buildings in order to keep to the spirit of the Gospel and to meet legislative requirements. However, it is important that, where disabled access is required, consideration is given to the facilities required for evacuation of disabled persons. Parish Priests and the Director of Properties should consider, and put in place, generic arrangements that would be required to assist visitors with physical impairments in the event that evacuation of a building becomes necessary.
- 5.8 Staff who may require assistance to evacuate should discuss their concerns and needs with their line manager, as applicable, so that any necessary individual arrangements can be put in place in advance. Where there is a requirement for assistance with evacuation, the line manager is responsible for asking the Health and Safety Team to prepare a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) specific to the staff member.
- 5.9 Where evacuation chairs are provided, training in their use is arranged by staff in the Health and Safety Team who have already received such training.

Person-centered risk assessments

- 5.10 The Archdiocese recognises that individual needs of occupiers of some buildings need to be considered during the risk assessment process. For example, a number of retired clergy are accommodated by the Archdiocese either in its own buildings or at other locations paid for by the Archdiocese. In such cases, person-centred risk assessments may be carried out, where necessary, by those responsible for Clergy Welfare.

6. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ACTIVATIONS OF FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS IN ARCHDIOCESAN BUILDINGS

- 6.1 In the event of a fire or a fire alarm activation at buildings within the Archdiocese, the person responsible for the day-to-day management of the building should be informed. This will normally be either a Parish Priest or the Director of Properties. The person responsible for the day-to-day management of the premises should ensure that the Health and Safety Team is informed by email and that it is recorded.
- 6.2 It is important that the Health and Safety Coordinator is aware of all incidents where the Local Authority fire and rescue service has been summoned to a church property. More importantly, it allows for investigations to be carried out into incidents, where necessary. Where a small fire has occurred but was subsequently extinguished without activating the fire warning system, the Health and Safety Coordinator should still be informed.

7. MEASURING PERFORMANCE

- 7.1 The Archdiocese recognises that it is not sufficient to have a Fire Safety Policy in place, but that compliance with this policy needs to be regularly monitored to ensure it is implemented fully and working effectively, and that the Policy needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date and to continuously improve fire safety performance.
- 7.2 The Property and Health & Safety Team will meet regularly to review fire safety performance and will provide a quarterly report on key fire safety performance indicators to The Trustees at their regular Trustee Meetings. Any fire incidents or serious fire safety matters will be included within the reports to the Trustees or, if necessary, will be communicated to the Trustees via the COO between meetings.
- 7.3 The Health & Safety Coordinator will monitor fire safety performance and make a regular report to the Director of Properties. This will include consideration of the remedial works required in FRAs, whether planned maintenance, inspections and tests are in date, if training is being delivered on schedule, and any fire incidents.
- 7.4 Where deficiencies in fire safety performance are identified, the Archdiocese will take steps to resolve the deficiencies as quickly as reasonably possible.
- 7.4 Local Health and Safety Representatives, Assistant Priests, employees and volunteers may be required to assist Parish Priests with day-to-day fire safety management in Parishes and all will be vigilant for any fire safety issues and will report such issues to the Parish Priest, Parish Finance Committee or Fabric Committee, as applicable, who will take action or refer to the Health & Safety Coordinator as necessary.
- 7.5 The responsible person will be vigilant for any fire safety issues within the scope of their area of operation and will report any concerns.

**ANNEX A
ARCHDIOCESAN ORGANOGRAM
Fire Safety Management**

