

# Fire Risk Assessment

To comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 as amended

This fire risk assessment should only be used by churches and chapels where normal activities are limited to what might be expected in a disused church or chapel building such as visitor experience, occasional public events such as concerts, or small-scale workshops.

## Information about our building

Name, address and postcode of Church or Chapel:

St Deiniol's  
Church Road  
Worthenbury  
Wrexham  
LL13 0AW

What Three Words: headliner.scorch.height

Description of the Church or Chapel and how it is used:

The church is currently closed for improvement works to be completed. Once completed the church will be open during the day for visitors. There are no staff/volunteers at the church to assist visitors other than at times where cleaning or maintenance work is being undertaken.

St Deiniol's church is constructed of sandstone, brick and mortar with slate and leadwork over a timber roof. Internal ceiling of the church and the walls are plastered.

There is a stone spiral stairway at the base of the church tower which leads to first floor level where the bell ringing room is located. The Gallery above the nave, housing the church organ, is accessed from first level via a doorway. From the first floor of the tower there is a steep wooden ladder which leads to second and third floor level. The clock chamber is located at second floor level, and the bell chamber is located above this at third floor level. The roof of the tower is above the bell chamber.

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Volunteers, contractors and Friends of Friendless Churches employees access the church to carry out general cleaning routines and similar. The clock chamber is accessed on a weekly basis in order to wind the clock mechanism and the ringing room is accessed 4 to 5 times per year by visiting bellringers.

Rough size in metres (Length, breadth, height)

23 metres x 10.1 metres x 8.6 metres (to apex of ceiling)

Number of occupants expected at any one time, day to day and for events:

Day to day: individuals and family groups are expected to visit. It is anticipated that groups no larger than 10 in number would visit independently at any one time. Total monthly visitors – approximately 30 persons.

Events: Approximately 100 persons at each event for four times per year.

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<p><b>Ignition Sources</b> Have ignition sources been eliminated as far as possible?</p>	<p>→</p> <p><b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check for</b> Open flames or sparks 5-year electrical test Portable Appliance Test (PAT) Signs of vandalism or arson External risks that might affect building Evidence of smoking Other</p> <p>The church has an electrical supply providing power to lighting and sockets. Last EICR test was on 11.7.25. Report was not seen during the assessment.</p> <p>The organ within the church requires electric power and is located at gallery level. There was no visible sign of Portable Appliance Testing certificates on the organ power plugs.</p> <p>Any portable electrical equipment used within the church should be subject to PAT regime.</p> <p>There is an open fireplace within the chancel. The assessor was informed that the fireplace will not be used.</p>	<p><b>Action to be taken to reduce or eliminate ignition sources and by when.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Responsible Person is to ensure that any faults found during the EICR test are actioned accordingly.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> If the organ is to be used then the organ must be subject to PAT or other suitable electrical testing regime.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Ensure electrical equipment used within the church is subject to electrical testing regime.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> If the fireplace is to be used the chimney should be examined by a suitably qualified expert to ensure fire cannot spread from the chimney to the structure of the property.</p>
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		<p>The church appears to be the tallest structure in the vicinity and could be prone to structural damage and fire in the event of a lightning strike.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> It is recommended that a survey be conducted by a suitably qualified person to ascertain whether the installation of lightning conducting system would reduce the risk of fire in the event of the church being struck by lightning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">↓ <b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Describe how ignition sources have been eliminated.</b>                  No lighters or matches were seen within the church during the assessment.                  No sign of smoking materials inside or around the perimeter of the church.                  No signs of any anti-social behaviour within or around the church.                  There is no heating boiler fitted within the church.</p>		

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<p><b>Combustibles</b> Is the amount of combustibles in the building as low as reasonably practicable?</p>	<p>→ <b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check for</b> Unnecessary clutter Stacked chairs Rubbish Highly flammables Full waste bins Sheds and other combustible items under the windows</p> <p>The area around the incoming electrical supply and wall mounted electrical consumer had items stored in close proximity. These included notice boards, a ladder and some books. There is a risk of fire spread should the consumer unit suffer a fault.</p> <p>The vestry within the church is used for storage of items associated with the maintenance of the church (cleaning materials, notice boards, hymn books, etc).</p> <p>A fire in the vestry could severely affect the means of escape for any persons on the upper levels of the tower.</p>	<p><b>Action to be taken to reduce or eliminate combustibles and by when.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> All items should be removed from the area around the electrical supply. It is recommended that no combustible items are stored within 1 metre of the electrical equipment.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The storage of items in the vestry area must be reduced to the lowest possible levels.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The door to the vestry should be kept closed whenever persons are on the upper levels of the church.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> In order to increase the time that the door of the vestry can resist any fire within the vestry, and protect the means of escape from upper levels, any combustible within the vestry items should be stored at least one metre from internal surface of the door.</p>
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		<p>The box pews to the rear of the nave, were being used to store items such as cleaning materials, cushions, leaflets and packaging materials. As these are close to the entrance and partially concealed they would present an opportunity for an arsonist. Any fire in this area could impede the escape for visitors within the church due to the close proximity to the main exit doors.</p> <p>The wheeled bin is currently stored unsecured against the external west wall of the church. A fire set within the bin could spread to the interior of the church or cause external damage to the church.</p> <p>Storage of items against the external wall of the church.</p> <p>Bushes and shrubs are growing against the church on the south side. At the time of the assessment these</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> The items stored within the rear pews should be removed and disposed of, recycled or stored elsewhere.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The wheeled bin should be stored within the external store on the northwest corner of the church. This will require some clearance work within the store beforehand. Alternatively, the bin could be stored away from the structure of the church and be secured in a suitable manner.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The items stored externally within the metal box on the northwest corner of the church should be removed and disposed of or recycled accordingly.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The shrubs and bushes against the south wall of the church should be maintained to a suitable height to ensure that any accidental or deliberate fire set in them would</p>
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		were being maintained to a suitable height and density.	not spread to the structure of the church via the windows above.
<p>↓</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Describe amount of combustibles present and why this is reasonable</b></p> <p>No full waste bins were observed within the church during the assessment. External waste storage is covered in the section above.</p> <p>All pews within the church are fixed and there was no stacking of unused chairs.</p> <p>No <b>highly</b> flammable items were observed during the assessment.</p>		

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<p><b>Sufficient exit/s</b> Can all occupants leave rapidly in case of fire?</p>	<p>→ <b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check for</b> Door/s that open easily without the use of a key. Less than 60 persons exit through an inward opening door. Travel distance less than 25m when only one direction of escape.</p> <p>The Northwest Nave doors and the North Chancel door are not currently suitable for use as exits due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Northwest nave door not being easily openable due to the poor fitting of the door. Both doors within this exit are currently prevented from opening easily due to them binding on the floor and frame</li> <li>2. The North chancel door was not openable during the assessment due to no key to the lock being available. The steps outside the door we also having improvement works conducted on them rendering them unusable.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Action to be taken to improve escape and by when.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> All doors within each opening into the church are to be adjusted in order that they are easily openable in the event of an emergency. Doors should have suitable handles to ensure they can be pulled open as they all open in an inward direction.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The steps on the outside of the North chancel door must be repaired to a safe condition and be suitable for use before the North chancel door can be deemed suitable for use in an emergency.</p>
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	<p>OCCUPANCY FIGURES:</p> <p><b>Seating is provided for approximately 280 persons within the church. There are insufficient suitable exits due to all doors being inward opening to accommodate 280 persons.</b></p> <p>Appropriate occupancy scenarios are detailed below:</p> <p>The church is provided with three external entrances. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The South Nave door (Main entrance/exit) – This entrance is <b>1400mm wide</b> and is fitted with 2 inward opening doors.</li> <li>2. The Northwest Nave door – This entrance is <b>1400mm wide</b> and is fitted with 2 inward opening doors.</li> <li>3. The North Chancel door – This entrance is <b>820mm wide</b> and is fitted with a single inward opening door.</li> </ol>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> Occupancy figures detailed are not to be exceeded</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Any event at the church resulting in more than 80 persons being in attendance should be managed accordingly. Responsibility for opening external doors in the event of an emergency should be given to particular individuals who should be positioned adjacent to doors throughout the event. Each individual should be shown how to open the doors and assist persons to evacuate the church.</p>
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		<p><b>Subject to all doors being maintained such that they are easily openable by visitors to the church and there being no outstanding actions within the fire risk assessment, the following occupancy figures are deemed suitable.</b></p> <p><b>Main entrance only in use:</b> In normal operation the travel distances within the church are suitable to allow a single exit (The South Nave door) to provide sufficient capacity for a maximum <b>60 persons</b> to be within the church at any one time.</p> <p><b>Main entrance plus one other door in use:</b> HMG fire risk assessment guidance for small and medium places of assembly allows for some flexibility in low-risk premises to the figure of 60 persons using an inward opening door for means of escape from a building. Flexibility of an additional 33% is deemed appropriate when 2 exits are available from the church. This is deemed appropriate based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the low risk within the church</li> </ol>	
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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The large width of the doors (1400mm)</li> <li>3. The clear lines of sight to all doors from all areas of the church aiding faster evacuation.</li> </ol> <p>One exit is always deemed to be lost to the fire in buildings with more than one exit.</p> <p><b>The resulting exit has sufficient capacity for a maximum 80 persons to be within the church at any one time.</b></p> <p><b>Main entrance plus two other doors available:</b> Based on the same level of flexibility for the inward opening door as detailed above and one exit deemed to be lost to the fire, the resultant sufficient capacity for a maximum <b>160 persons</b> to be within the church at any one time.</p> <p>A General Emergency Evacuation plan should be created.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> A general emergency evacuation plan (GEEP) should be created and displayed adjacent to the visitor's book. The GEEP should display:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. details of the escape routes</li> <li>2. location of fire extinguishers</li> <li>3. correct use of fire extinguishers</li> </ol>
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		<p>The means of escape from the upper floors of the church is via a single direction means of escape involving ladders and a spiral stairway.</p>	<p>4. any other relevant fire safety information.</p> <p>This GEEP could take the form of a floor plan of the church showing the ground floor area accessed by visitors and clearly showing the available exit and escape route. The location of fire extinguishers should be shown on the plan along with a description of how to call the emergency services having safely evacuated the church.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Access to the upper floors should be prevented to all visitors by keeping the door at the base of the spiral stairway locked. Controlled access should be permitted to the upper floors for maintenance, clock winding, organ use, bell ringing, tours etc however, a fire safety management plan should be created and be available for all persons using these areas. The management plan must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. details of the escape routes form these areas,</li> <li>2. location of fire extinguishers</li> <li>3. correct use of fire extinguishers,</li> <li>4. ensuring the base of the stairs is free from combustibles,</li> <li>5. ensuring the vestry doors is closed and locked.</li> <li>6. details of lone working policy for the area.</li> <li>7. any other relevant fire safety information.</li> </ol>
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		<p>Access and egress for mobility impaired visitors</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> There are steps and uneven paths around the church. Any access issues for wheelchair users or persons with mobility issues must be highlighted to visitors. Visitors must be made aware that if they gained access to the building, they should also ensure that they can safely self-evacuate the church in an emergency.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Describe the way occupants will leave in an emergency</b></p> <p>Visitors will generally leave the church through the same door (South Nave) which they accessed the church. The main door is visible from all parts of the church.</p> <p>The main door is 1400mm wide and is fitted with a latch which can be operated with one hand.</p> <p>The maximum travel distance from the furthest part of the church is 28 metres, which is deemed suitable within this low-risk church given the flexibility in travel distances afforded by the HMG guidance i.e. 25metres.</p> <p>Should an event be held for more than 60 persons, then another door will need to be made available as detailed in the relevant section of this Fire Risk Assessment.</p> <p>There should be no visitors in the areas above ground floor. Any volunteers, employees or invited guests using the upper floors of the church will escape via the ladders from 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor levels and then via the stone spiral stairway from the 1<sup>st</sup> floor to the ground floor level. Persons using these areas must receive input on the means of escape and safety precautions for these areas contained within the fire safety management plan from the upper levels of the church as detailed I the relevant section of this Fire Risk Assessment.</p>		

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<p><b>Lighting Levels</b> Is it light enough for occupants to leave</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">→ <b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check For</b> Daylight use only Temporary emergency lights for evening events</p> <p>The church is fitted with electric lighting but there is no emergency lighting provision.</p> <p>It was noted that there are external lights within the grounds of the church. It was not known if these lights were functioning at the time of the assessment</p>	<p><b>Action to be taken to improve situation and by when.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Ensure that if the church is used for events outside the hours of daylight that handheld torch/mobile phone torches are available for use by organisers to assist with the evacuation of occupants in the event of a power failure.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Borrowed light levels should be assessed prior to events in the hours of darkness being held. External lighting should be checked and repaired where required to improve external lighting levels.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Describe how occupants will be able to see to escape if the power fails.</b></p>		

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	<p>Mains electric lighting is provided to all areas within the church. Church is open to visitors during daylight hours. The church is set within the village, and the surrounding streetlights should provide sufficient 'borrowed light' to ensure external evacuation routes from the church are illuminated and can be safely used. This should be assessed further prior to holding events in the hours of darkness.</p>
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<p><b>Early Warning of fire</b> Will occupants be aware of fire before it affects their escape.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">→ <b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check For</b> Sightlines to exit door/s Height of ceiling where smoke will accumulate Porches kept sterile Limited combustibles</p>	<p><b>Action to be taken to improve awareness and by when.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Describe the way occupants will leave in an emergency</b></p> <p>Visitors within the church will make their way out of the church via the door through which they entered the church. This exit is clearly visible from all parts of the church. The ceilings are high (8.6 metres) and will act as a smoke reservoir allow sufficient time for visitors to escape below any developing smoke layer. Travel distances are 28 metres maximum travel distance within the church. There is a very limited amount of combustible items within the church.</p> <p>A fire safety management plan for the upper floors of the church is to be created and be strictly followed. No visitors are permitted on the upper floors unless as part of a guided tour with a person familiar with the fire safety management plan for the upper floors. Any volunteers or invited guests are to be fully aware of the fire safety management plan prior to access the upper floors of the church.</p>		

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<p><b>Signs and notices</b> Is building layout simple enough for occupants to escape without further guidance?</p>	<p>→ <b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check For</b> Exit/s are also the entrance and are obviously the way out. No special instructions are need for occupants to escape safely.</p>	<p><b>Action to be taken to improve signage and by when.</b></p> <p>None required</p>
<p>↓</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Describe how occupants will know when and where to exit in case of emergency.</b></p> <p>The exit route is the via the same door that has been used to access the church and will therefore be familiar to the visitor. If additional exits are used during events then organisers will assist visitors to the appropriate exit. Exits from upper floors will be made familiar to persons using those areas as part of the fire safety management plan.</p>		


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<p><b>Fire Extinguishers</b> Are extinguishers required to allow safe escape in case of fire?</p>	<p>→ <b>No or Don't Know</b></p>	<p><b>Check For</b> Hazards that cannot be controlled without the use of an extinguisher</p> <p>The upper floors of the church are only accessible via the stone spiral stairway from ground floor level. A fire at the base of the stairway would severely impact on the ability of persons on the upper floors. A minimum of two suitable fire extinguishers fitted at the base and one at the head of spiral stairway will assist with the evacuation of persons in these areas in the event of a fire.</p>	<p><b>Action to be taken to reduce hazard and by when.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Fire extinguishers should be fitted as follows: Base of stone spiral staircase: 2 x Britannia Fire P50 6 litre water spray extinguishers (these fire extinguishers are suitable for general use and for use on fires involving electricity). Head of stone spiral stairway (first floor): 1 x 6 litre water spray extinguisher.</p> <p>Fire extinguishers can be wall mounted or placed on the floor on suitable plinths in keeping with the historic setting.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> Friends of Friendless Churches may benefit from using P50 fire extinguishers due to the lower level of annual maintenance required. <a href="#">Britannia Fire   UK Fire Extinguisher Manufacturer   Over 50 Yrs Experience</a></p>
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 <b>Yes</b>	<p><b>Describe why extinguishers are not required to escape safely.</b></p> <p>The electrical installation is checked regularly. Lighting units are fitted high within the ceiling space and away from visitors.</p> <p>The only source of ignition at the time of the assessment is the electrical installation Visitors will be separated from the electrical installation by the door of the vestry in which it is located. The travel distances are acceptable therefore all visitors should have safely left the church prior to any major fire growth and therefore should not require a fire extinguisher to aid their evacuation from the church.</p> <p>The fire extinguishers detailed above are to assist with the evacuation of volunteers and invited guests who are accessing the upper floors of the church and subject to the fire safety management plan detailed in the relevant section of this Fire Risk Assessment.</p>

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In carrying out this fire risk assessment we have noted appendix C of the government guidance for fire safety risk assessment which refers to listed and historic buildings and note that we will endeavour to strike a balance between ensuring sufficient fire safety measures are in place for the safety of people yet avoid extensive alterations to help maintain the character of the building.

<b>Person Appointed by the Friends of Friendless Churches</b>  Simon Bromley Eng Tech GIFireE
<b>Signed on behalf of Friends or Friendless Churches</b>  
<b>Date fire risk assessment completed</b>  22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2026
<b>Date suggested for review of fire risk assessment</b>  January 2027
You can see the full documentation referred to at the links below: Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:  Government Guidance including a fire risk assessment form is available from: <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/678100d3d5422b88ec018418/A+guide+to+making+your+small+non-domestic+premises+safe+from+fire+2024.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/678100d3d5422b88ec018418/A+guide+to+making+your+small+non-domestic+premises+safe+from+fire+2024.pdf</a>