

Buildings Risk Assessments for Hire of St Laurence Church and St Laurence Church Rooms

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Introduction

Below are risk assessments for St Laurence Church and for St Laurence Church Rooms (The Shambles Hall and Upper Room). It is important that people hiring these facilities:

- Are aware of the risks and mitigations in place.
- Consider whether their event will lead to additional risks. If further risks are identified an additional, event specific, Risk Assessment should be created (a template can be made available).
- Note that events expecting more than 60 visitors will require a separate risk assessment to be provided (a template can be made available).

Building risk assessment for St Laurence Church Stroud: Version for hirers

Version 1.3, 31st October 2025 (Peter Chester & Hugh Richards, based on full Church building risk assessment Version 3.1)

General note:

The 2017 Quinquennial Inspection stated: *“Those parts of the church which are regularly used by members of the congregation appear to offer no unacceptable hazards.”*

This does not mean there can be no unacceptable risks, since unsafe actions can lead to unacceptable risks from otherwise acceptable hazards.

The 2022 Quinquennial Inspection did not identify any unacceptable hazards within the Church or the Garden of Remembrance (for which the PCC has responsibility).

Note for hirers:

This is a selection of entries from the full building risk assessment for routine activities which may potentially be of relevance to hirers. Entries referring to ‘volunteers’ may also be applicable to the hirer’s paid staff. Entries referring to routine cleaning and maintenance and to accessing external areas (Garden of Remembrance, former boiler room and location of gas & electricity meters) may occasionally be relevant to some hirers, and are included for completeness.

Person(s) potentially at risk	Identified risk	Existing mitigation(s) of risk	Likelihood of occurrence (1-3; 3 = high)	Consequence s of occurrence*	Risk rating (out of 9)
All building users	Potential inability to find facilities, equipment and materials for mitigating unsafe conditions as they arise	“Where to find it” notices at information points ¹ near main entrance and in clergy vestry stating locations of such facilities, equipment and materials, and how to access them.	1	2	3
All building users	Slipping on wet tiled floor following spillage or trodden in by visitors during wet weather	Mop & bucket available. Yellow wet floor hazard sign available.	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping due to uneven floor levels, especially in carpeted area	Warning signs on entry door and at “visitors information points” at entrance and in Vicar’s/Clergy Vestry.	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping over flooring edges, including broken tiles	Warning signs as above. Black duct tape in use to minimise edges, available in Building Resources Boxes in Vicar’s/Clergy Vestry. Yellow warning sign to place over any new hazard as a short-term measure before physical mitigation.	1	3	3

¹ The two main information points are in the porch and in the Vicar’s/Clergy Vestry. Both include a building plan (marked to show emergency evacuation routes and locations of fire extinguishers) and “Where to find it” notices, covering first aid box, accident book, wheelchair, slip / trip hazard warning sign(s), mop & bucket, vacuum cleaners and the “Building Resources Box” containing basic tools, duct tape and other useful materials in the Vicar’s/Clergy Vestry.

Person(s) potentially at risk	Identified risk	Existing mitigation(s) of risk	Likelihood of occurrence (1-3; 3 = high)	Consequences of occurrence*	Risk rating (out of 9)
All building users	Tripping over dark stone plinth of font at west end of nave	White peelable tape put on protruding plinth edges.	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping over trailing cables	Limited length of cable covers available	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping or falling down steps (at entry and exit points and access to vestries)	Steps down from west door (ringing chamber) not to be used as routine entrance/exit.	1	3	3
Vulnerable adults including visually impaired people	Injury by slipping or tripping	Signage at entrance to includes request that hazards be drawn to the attention of accompanied vulnerable adults.	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping at main entrance (South porch)	Solid rubber ramp permanently in place	1	3	3
All building users	Inability to access toilets	Hall toilets open when church in use; location stated at information points near entrance and in Vicar's/Clergy Vestry. Key to hall available in key box in Vicar's/Clergy Vestry.	1	2	2
All building users	Injury from inappropriately stored items: - tripping over items - toppling of large items	None at present	1	3	3
All building users	Inhalation of asbestos	Warning labels on accessible asbestos-containing items (undersides and rear edges of shelves over radiators)	1	3	3
All building users	Lightning initiation of fire	Annual test of lightning conductor	1	3	3
All building users	Electrical initiation of fire	Annual portable appliance testing (PAT). 5-yearly EICR check of wiring etc.	1	3	3
All building users	Initiation of accidental small fire from candle, incense burner or similar	Means of ignition (matches, lighter) controlled - kept locked away when not in use	2	1	2
All building users	Inability to stop fire spreading out of control	Fire extinguishers available	1	3	3
All building users	Being trapped by fire ² [See very important footnote]	Main through south porch has fire exit sign above it. Fire action notices at all potential exit doors.	1	3	3

² **IMPORTANT NOTE:** See separate document “Fire Safety information Hirers” for any event or activity with attendance anticipated to exceed 60, for which emergency exits other than the main entrance (South porch) are needed.

Person(s) potentially at risk	Identified risk	Existing mitigation(s) of risk	Likelihood of occurrence (1-3; 3 = high)	Consequences of occurrence*	Risk rating (out of 9)
		Keys to external doors of Bell Tower Ringing Chamber, Vicar's/Clergy Vestry & Choir Vestry available immediately next to each door (but note that doors must be unlocked if being claimed as fire exits).			
Users of clergy vestry	Carbon monoxide poisoning from gas boilers when in use	Carbon monoxide alarm in vestry placed by heating system controls.	1	3	3
Volunteers setting up for services and events	Strain injury from poor manual handling practice (e.g. moving altar)	Label on back of altar discouraging attempts to move it single-handed	1	2	2
Volunteers setting up for services and events	Injury from unsafe actions while putting up or taking down staging ³	No one to have responsibility for putting up or taking down of staging without prior training from an appropriately experienced person. A simple set of instructions to aid safe set-up and take-down of staging is provided in staging accessories storage box. If staging is required, the activity/event may be considered not routine and the organiser should consider whether an event risk assessment is needed.	1	3	3
Volunteers undertaking routine cleaning and maintenance	Falling from height	All ladders locked away in Slype. All working at height to be subject to point of work safety assessment and supervised by person on the ground, in accordance with Team policy. Caretaker trained in working at height and able to advise volunteers.	1	3	3
Volunteers undertaking routine cleaning and maintenance	Injury by falling object while someone is working at height	All working at height to be subject to point of work safety assessment and supervised by person on the ground, in accordance with Team policy. Supervisor to stay clear of area into which an object might fall.	1	3	3
Volunteers undertaking cleaning and maintenance	Electric shock	Annual portable appliance testing (PAT).	1	3	3

³ Note that risks associated with using the staging for events must be considered within those events' risk assessments.

Person(s) potentially at risk	Identified risk	Existing mitigation(s) of risk	Likelihood of occurrence (1-3; 3 = high)	Consequences of occurrence*	Risk rating (out of 9)
Children on the premises	No risks specific to children (currently no regular children's activities in the church)	N/A [Stroud Team Safeguarding Policy, including named Safeguarding Officer(s), is displayed on internal notice-board.]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vulnerable adults on the premises (in general)	Inappropriate actions towards vulnerable adults, including inappropriate response to disclosure of a safeguarding concern	Church of England Basic Safeguarding Awareness training required for all relevant volunteers (e.g. for Open Church). Stroud Team Safeguarding Policy, including named Safeguarding Officer(s), is displayed on internal notice-board.	1	3	3
Visitors to Garden of Remembrance (GoR)	Inappropriate actions towards vulnerable adults, including inappropriate response to disclosure of a safeguarding concern	Church of England Basic Safeguarding Awareness training required for all relevant volunteers (e.g. for Open Church). Stroud Team Safeguarding Policy, including named Safeguarding Officer(s), is displayed on internal notice-board.	2	3	6
Visitors to Garden of Remembrance (GoR)	Tripping over protruding concrete slabs of GoR paths	None at present [NB Stroud Town Council Green Spaces Team maintain the northern churchyard, including path to GoR; see below.]	2	3	6
Visitors to Garden of Remembrance (GoR)	Tripping or slipping due to leaves or fallen branches on the GoR path	Checks and maintenance being undertaken on an occasional basis [NB Stroud Town Council Green Spaces Team maintain north churchyard excl. GoR]	1	3	3
People accessing former boiler room (basement)	Falling down steps with no hand-rail	Padlock on gate at top of steps to prevent casual access	1	3	3
People accessing gas and electricity meters	Tripping/slipping due to brambles, vegetation and rubbish that have collected in this area	As-needed clearance of the area of brambles, other vegetation and rubbish, with assistance of Stroud Town Council Green Spaces Team if needed.	1	2	2

Building risk assessment for St Laurence Rooms (Shambles Hall [Church Hall] and Upper Room), Stroud, for routine use of the facilities: Version for hirers

Version 1.1, 5 December 2024 (Peter Chester & Hugh Richards, based on full Church building risk assessment Version 3.1)

Person(s) potentially at risk	Identified risk	Existing mitigation(s) of risk	Likelihood of occurrence	Consequences of occurrence*	Risk rating (out of 9)
All building users	Potential inability to find facilities, equipment and materials for mitigating unsafe conditions as they arise	None at present	3	2	6
All building users	Potential inability to find first aid kit when needed	First aid kit located on top of old first aid box on kitchen wall.	2	2	4
All building users	Slipping on wet floor following spillage or trodden in during wet weather	Mop & bucket available in Kitchen. Stocks of paper towels maintained in kitchen and toilets. Two yellow 'wet floor' hazard signs available in kitchen.	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping	No special hazards identified. Fixed ramp for disabled access at rear entrance	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping over trailing cables	None at present	1	3	3
All building users	Tripping or falling down stairs/steps, at main hall entry and exit points and stairs access to Upper Room and office areas. Head injury from low ceiling over office stairs.	Step-free access at rear entrance (found satisfactory in 2016 accessibility survey by wheelchair user). Non-slip stair treads and handrails in place for access to upper areas. PIR controlled external light outside church office door (stepped access).	1	3	3
Vulnerable adults including visually impaired people	Injury by slipping or tripping	No specific mitigations (no hazards specific to such people identified – e.g. no uneven floor surfaces)	1	3	3
All building users	Inhalation of asbestos	Asbestos survey in 2015 did not identify any asbestos hazards within the building	1	3	3
All building users	Electrical initiation of fire	Annual portable appliance testing (PAT). 5-yearly EICR check of wiring etc.	1	3	3
All building users	Fire spreading out of control / people being trapped by fire	Fire exits signed Emergency lighting fitted	1	3	3

		Fire alarm system installed Fire extinguishers available Indoor Market (activity with largest number of people in the building over the year) has its own fire evacuation plan.			
Users of upstairs room/kitchen	Carbon monoxide poisoning from gas Appliances when in use	Carbon monoxide alarms for boiler in Upper Room and for gas cooker in kitchen	1	3	3
Volunteers setting up for events	Strain injury from poor manual handling practice (e.g. putting up and taking down tables)	None at present	2	2	4
Volunteers undertaking cleaning and maintenance using electrical equipment	Electric shock	Annual portable appliance testing (PAT).	1	3	3
Children on the premises	Electric shock	Socket guards in place for all low-down sockets (safety of young children)	1	3	3
Children, young people and vulnerable adults on the premises	Safeguarding	Stroud Team Safeguarding Policy, including named Officer(s), is displayed on internal notice-board.	N/A	N/A	N/A
All building users	Lack of knowledge of health & safety issues in general; and building-specific ones in particular		3	1	3