# Small-Blue-Logo

# Fire Safety for hirers

The law requires anyone using a building for non domestic purposes to have carried out a risk assessment and to have taken steps to minimise the risk that fire presents. When a building is hired out, that responsibility for fire safety is split between the maintainer of the building and the user. This document describes the key elements of the risk assessment for Brickfields, and your responsibilities as a user of the buildings.

“The buildings”: Brickfields Main Building and/or the Annexe.

“We”: the directors and officers of City Church who maintain the buildings.

“You”: yourself as the hirer of the building, or, if you are not going to be present when the building is used, somebody who will be present to whom you have delegated responsibility for the event.

We have appointed people responsible for fire safety who have identified the key fire risks and we have taken the appropriate practical steps to reduce that risk. However, we are unable to assess the risks for your particular use of the buildings, and there are some practical steps that can only be undertaken by you. Below we describe the key risks and precautions that we have taken, and highlight some of the things that you should consider. You are responsible for assessing the specific risks that may be associated with your use of the building, and implementing any precautions or checks. You can view a copy of the risk assessment (which describes the risks) or the fire safety policy (which describes the safety features of the buildings) on request.

## Reducing the Risk of Fire

There are many potential sources of fire in the Main Building, these include lighting and electrical equipment, and specifically the main heater (in the boiler room), the water heaters in the kitchen and cloakrooms, the electric heaters in the crèche, hallway and other meeting rooms, electrical equipment in the chair store, and the heating and cooking devices in the kitchen. There are electric heaters in the kitchen and foyer of the Annexe. If you have access to these items, please be careful not to store any flammable items (including litter) near or on top of them. In particular, do not obstruct any heater vents – this could cause overheating or a poisonous gas (ie carbon monoxide) build up.

You should also avoid creating any other fire source risks. In particular:

* Smoking is not allowed on the site.
* Electrical equipment that you bring in to the building should be fault-free and correctly maintained.
* Caution must be exercised when using candles or similar. They should be well supported in a nonflammable holder, not left lit when there is nobody in the same room, and placed well away from flammable materials.

You should consider the impact on fire safety of paper, fabrics, and other materials used as decorations for your event, paying particular attention to siting and fixing them appropriately.

## Reducing the Spread of Fire

We have identified a number of doors in the buildings that, if closed, will help slow the spread of fire from a potential fire source to other areas. These doors are all marked “Fire door keep shut”. Do not prop these doors open, particularly when there is nobody in either room. The Main Building has an automatic fire detection system and call points are located in corridors and by fire exits. The Annexe has a manual alarm in the foyer. Maintained fire extinguishers are placed throughout the buildings. They can be used to prevent a small fire spreading, but there are dangers associated with them. Please only use the fire extinguishers after the alarm has been raised, if you are sure you can escape safely, and if you are confident that you can use the extinguisher safely.

## Allowing Evacuation

The buildings have a large number of fire exits, which we check frequently. However, we still recommend that you check all the relevant fire exits are working and unobstructed each time you use the building. Further, it is your responsibility to ensure that everyone in the building can reach the exits quickly and safely. This involves making sure that doors are unlocked (we recommend opening the main doors when there are fifty or more people in the Main Building), and that there are appropriate aisles in blocks of chairs (rows should be fewer than 12 chairs, with the chairs linked, the rows separated by 30cm, aisles should be unobstructed and at least 105cm wide), no obstructions to the exits (in particular, don't put tables in the Main Building foyer), and no trip hazards (tape down any cables that run across aisles).

In the Main Building the main hall has more than one exit route, but there is only one staircase for evacuation from the upstairs rooms. Given that they are likely to take longer to evacuate, it is not appropriate to use the upstairs rooms for large numbers of children or people with impaired mobility without taking extra precautions, and in any case there should never be more than fifty people upstairs.

## Successful Evacuation

You should consider who will be in the building when you are using it and make sure that they can evacuate safely – that is, they know what the fire alarm sounds like, and how to exit the building. If you expect people who are not familiar with the building then you may need to point out the fire exits at the beginning of each event. It may also be helpful, particularly for large groups to designate trained stewards or “Fire Marshals” who can help to direct people in the event of an emergency. After an evacuation, it is good to assess whether or not the building is empty. Fire Marshals may be able to conduct a sweep of the building (if safe). You may wish to maintain a register of people in the building that can be checked after an evacuation, particularly if there are children in the building. It is useful to have a pre-arranged assembly point (we recommend the far corner of the car park, next to the office) where you can take a register, or simply ask if anyone is missing.

## Emergency Services

In an emergency, you should call the emergency services by dialing 999. There is no phone in Brickfields Main Building or Annexe, so please ensure that you have a mobile phone with you. Please also make our On-call staff member aware as soon as possible (number to be added)

**In order that emergency service vehicles can access the building, please restrict parking to the marked bays**.

## Follow Up

If anything in this document is unclear, or if you have questions or concerns, please discuss them with us (via the church office) as soon as possible, preferably before you use the building. Contact us as soon as possible if you notice any problems in the building, particularly with the fire precautions that are described above.

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