

V2201

Next Review Date Feb 2025



**WILMSLOW UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**  
**EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

**Part A - Halls**

This document clarifies responsibilities and clarifies good practice for organizations and groups using the Church Halls for either regular or occasional events.

**Wilmslow United Reformed Church** is responsible for providing a safe venue for functions and giving advice on Emergency Procedures. Users should recognise that other groups may be using the building at the same time. As a result each group leader is responsible for the safety of their members and for minimizing any damage to the premises.

**IN CASE OF FIRE**

The Church Halls complex has a FIRE ALARM system and all users of the building must be aware of what to do if the ALARM sounds or they DISCOVER A FIRE.

Anyone discovering a FIRE should immediately go to a building exit and press the adjacent alarm call box (painted RED with a white target in its centre). This will activate the ALARMS to warn all others in the building. Everyone MUST now leave the building and the activity leaders should ensure that all rooms (including the three toilet areas) are empty.

The alarm is NOT connected to the Fire Service, so a mobile phone must be used to call the EMERGENCY SERVICES on 999 or 112 - FIRE – stating:

## **There is a Fire in Wilmslow United Reformed Church Halls on Chapel Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 1PR**

These details are also displayed near to the Alarm Control Panel in the entrance lobby.

Upon leaving the premises individuals should assemble in the Medical Centre Car Park where a roll-call should be taken. A record should be made of anybody injured or taken to hospital. Any driver who has parked their car on the premises is asked to stand by it but do not move or disturb it until instructed to do so by the Police or Fire Brigade.

Once all halls, kitchen and toilets have been evacuated, and everyone accounted for, the activity leader should inspect the premises for the source of the alarm. The alarm can then be cancelled following the instructions on the Control Panel.

If a fire is discovered, and it is SAFE TO DO SO, it can be fought with the equipment provided.

If a check of the building shows that there is NO FIRE and that it was a FALSE ALARM then people may be allowed back into the building.

If the alarm is triggered either by a real incident or a false alarm the system will alert one of the **First Responders** on (01625 408821) or (527204) or 07811 386895 who will attend and reset the alarm. If no one arrives within 15 minutes please call one of these numbers for assistance

### **Part B - Undercroft**

#### **1 Purpose**

This procedure is to be used if, for any reason, the Church building must be evacuated in an Emergency. Possible reasons include a) Fire, either in the lower ground floor or the Church above, b) Bomb threat or c) Sudden structural failure.

#### **2 Responsibilities**

Anyone discovering a Fire or other reason to evacuate the building should immediately go and activate the nearest alarm call box (painted red with a white target at its centre).

If the alarm sounds immediately evacuate the building using the nearest safe exit without collecting personal belongings.

There are four emergency exits to this area. All escape routes and exits are marked with clear signs and there is emergency lighting on key routes. It is essential that organisers of events familiarise themselves with the location and operation of these escape route and exits.

The primary exits for disabled or infirm users are via the exit into the hall's car park and from the foot of the stairwell close by the refreshment servery. The other two exits on the Chapel Lane side will take escapees outside the building but there are steps to climb.

The event organiser must nominate an individual to inform the Emergency Services from a mobile phone (999 or 112). The location to quote on the phone is **"United Reformed Church, Church Building on Chapel lane, Wilmslow, SK9 1PR"**

### **3 Assembly point**

Upon leaving the premises individuals should assemble in the Medical Centre Car Park where a roll-call should be taken. A record should be made of anybody injured or taken to hospital. Any driver who has parked their car on the premises is asked to stand by it but not to move or disturb it until instructed to do so by the Police or Fire Brigade.

### **4 Organisation**

To ensure the safe operation of the procedure the Event Organiser must nominate a minimum of one additional person to assist in any evacuation.

This nominated person must inform the Emergency Services as directed in 2 above and then assist the organiser in overseeing the evacuation of individuals.

The Event organiser must check all rooms and toilets to ensure they are empty and close all doors before leaving the area themselves. They should then go to Chapel Lane to indicate location to the Emergency Services.

### **5 Fire Extinguishers**

There are a variety of extinguishers CO2, Water and Foam. If a fire is discovered and it is SAFE TO DO SO it can be fought with the equipment provided. The location of these extinguisher are shown on the maps located next to the alarm points.

## 6. False Alarms

If the alarm is proved to be 'false', the sounder can be silenced following instructions on the control board in the Office Vestibule

## 7 Communications

If the alarm is triggered either by a real incident or a false alarm the system will alert on of the **First Responders** on (07811 386895), or ( 01625 408821) or (01625 527204) who will attend and reset the alarm. If no-one arrives in 15 minutes please call one of these numbers for assistance.

## Part C – Worship Area

This document clarifies responsibilities and provides good practice guidance to organisations using the main Church building for functions involving members of the public.

**Wilmslow United Reformed Church** is responsible for providing a safe venue for functions and giving advice on Emergency Procedures. There will always be at least one church leader present at any large event who will:

- ensure all emergency exit doors are unlocked before the event starts
- ensure there is a working microphone for the opening information announcement about evacuation procedures and for the use of the Emergency Controller
- know where the main electrical switches are located and how to access them
- be prepared to activate the church fire alarm in the event of fire
- know the location of four torches to be used by the Emergency Stewards in the case of an evacuation from a dark or smoke-affected church
- have a mobile phone with them and be ready to call the Emergency Services on 112 or 999 if required, quoting the location:

**“Wilmslow United Reformed Church, Church Building on Chapel Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 1PR”**

**Your organisation** is responsible for the management of emergency evacuation including the behaviour of participants/audience. You must make allowance not only for any young people in your charge but also other members of the audience. If the alarm sounds evacuate immediately.

### **Before the event you must:-**

- Nominate an **Emergency Controller** to take overall charge of the event.
- Nominate a minimum of three **Emergency Stewards** who understand their responsibilities, and are familiar with the Emergency Exits, exit routes and operation of the exit doors.

### **During the event you must:**

1. Ensure the Emergency Controller makes an opening announcement saying where the emergency exits are and confirming what to do in the case of an emergency evacuation. **This person MUST use a microphone to announce instructions.**
2. Make sure the Emergency Stewards keep the Emergency Exits clear at all times. These must not be blocked by chairs, instruments or equipment. The Emergency Exits and exit routes under the Church are clearly marked and are:-
  1. through the front vestibule and out of main and side entrance doors – best route for those with disabilities
  2. through the door on the side of the church – refuge area behind that fire door for seriously disabled
  3. through the door at the front of the church by the DaisPlease note that exits 2) and 3) involve steep stairs and may not be suitable for elderly, disabled or infirm individuals.

### **In an emergency you must:**

1. As a first priority ensure that people leave the Worship area, Vestibule, and Toilet as quickly as possible. Only afterwards should any attempt be made to fight the fire. The Emergency Stewards must make sure that escape routes are clear of obstructions and smoke.
2. The Emergency Controller should make this announcement with the microphone:

***“There is no need to panic but we must evacuate the building. Please remain in your seats until you are told to leave by an Emergency Steward. Take your property with you. When you get outside, move away from the building immediately and go to Wilmslow Medical Centre car park at the rear of the Church, along Chapel Lane, to await instructions. Parents and their children will be reunited there.*”**

***Drivers, if your car is on Church Property stand by it but do not move or disturb it until instructed by the Police or Fire Brigade. If you are disabled or infirm, please sit still until you are helped out of the building by the Emergency Stewards. Thank you.”***

- The Emergency Stewards will then guide people row by row to the exits, including those in the church balcony. If the balcony stairs are blocked those people sitting there will be evacuated by the emergency services on their arrival.

### **General Information**

- ◆ The **layout of the seating** influences how many people can safely use the building. Sufficient space must be allowed for easy movement around the building. This is particularly important when large numbers of children are in attendance with many sitting on the floor. It is recommended that at least five rows at the front must have side aisles. This allows access from the sides of the church to the main aisle for those who are ready to depart. Anyone who needs to change into or out of a costume before leaving in a non-emergency should do so in one of the side transepts to avoid blocking the exit path of others.
  - ◆ The **timing of events** must consider the arrangements for delivery and collection of participants and attendees. Particular attention needs to be given during school events when large numbers of children will need to be collected. Organisers need to inform parents etc., in advance, of arrangements and these **should not involve parents meeting their children inside the building.** Every effort should be made to avoid over-running because experience has shown that this can cause problems.
  - ◆ Vehicles **must not park** at the front of the Church as free access is needed for emergency evacuation of people and the arrival of emergency services. The only exception to this is for those with mobility problems, who may park by prior arrangement with the event organisers, provided that access is not obstructed.
- ◆ The WURC church leader(s) on duty, with the agreement of the Emergency Controller, will be present in the vestibule to assist with evacuation of the building and moving people to the Medical Centre car park. They will also activate/deactivate the fire alarm as necessary and greet the Emergency Services when they arrive.

The fire extinguishers are located as follows:-

- ◆ in the Church Vestibule ( water)
- ◆ at the PA control desk ( carbon dioxide)
- ◆ inside the exit door by the Dais ( water and carbon dioxide)