

Buxton Methodist Church

Risk Assessment related to use of the Church Kitchen

1. Scope

This Risk Assessment is written in the context of Church based users of the kitchen. Other users, such as hirers who have included use of the kitchen (either full or limited) within their hire, may find the contents useful, but should be clear that reading this document does not absolve them from responsibility for creating their own risk assessment, as required by the General Risk Assessment, which will have been provided to them as part of their hire contract.

2. Responsible Persons

Any group which uses the kitchen for more than the simple preparation of hot drinks and subsequent “washing up”, shall appoint a Responsible Person who oversees the activities and takes responsibility for the general safety of users of the kitchen during those activities. If they are not to be present on each occasion when their group uses the kitchen, they may appoint “Deputy Responsible Persons” as necessary.

The Responsible Person (or their Deputy) shall supervise activities and further responsibilities in the kitchen to ensure, as far as possible, a safe environment, including by the training of those who will be operating any of the kitchen equipment. In this context, a sharp kitchen knife is considered to be kitchen equipment.

Specific safety points related to each item of equipment are provided in the Annex to this document.

A brief resume of major points from this document are provided in a separate document which should be seen and acknowledged by anyone working under the instruction of a Responsible Person. It is not necessary for this document to be seen by all such supervised persons.

3. Safety Principles

All users of the kitchen shall take care of their own safety and shall do nothing to compromise the safety of other users. Specifically:

3.1 The kitchen has not been specifically prepared for use by children. Therefore any organisation that intends to use the kitchen in a way that involves anyone under the age of 16 shall make a specific risk assessment related to the activities to be undertaken by the children, noting that there are no temperature limiters provided on any taps and that high temperature surfaces will exist in relation to the use of much of the kitchen equipment. No one under the age of 16 shall operate the gas cooker or the water boiler. The Responsible Person (or deputy) shall record the nature of the activity, along with a risk assessment, and that they accept full responsibility for the safety of the children. They shall retain a copy of their risk assessments and make them available to the Church Office on request.

3.2 When using the kitchen purely as ancillary to other parts of the premises, in order to provide hot drinks and for washing crockery, all those involved shall sign the declaration at the foot of Annex A

3.3 If use of kitchen equipment has been agreed, all relevant users shall be familiar with the contents of Annex B in relation to the specific items of kitchen equipment, and shall sign the declaration at the foot of Annex B, confirming which items of equipment they have been given permission to use and that they understand the risk assessments for those items of equipment given in Annex B.

3.4 In general, users of the kitchen shall not bring additional equipment or implements into the kitchen. If such is required for specific purposes, the bringer of such equipment shall sign the declaration at Annex C, including recording the justification for bringing such equipment onto the premises.

3.5 The Responsible Person (or deputy) shall keep the declarations and make them available to the Church Office on request.

3.6 Obstructions, particularly at floor level, can lead to trips and falls. Keep the floor clear and avoid bringing any unnecessary items into the kitchen.

3.7 Bending and lifting of heavy items can lead to back strain unless proper lifting techniques are employed (always bending the legs rather than the back, for instance). Where possible always use two people to cooperate on lifting heavy items.

3.8 Carrying drinks, etc., from the kitchen to and from the main hall can lead to potential problems because of reduced sight lines, leading to collisions with others. Take extra care, particularly when carrying multiple drinks on trays. Trays are available with a non-slip surface.

3.9 Wearing appropriate footwear (no open toes, etc.) should mitigate problems relating to tripping, dropping, etc.

3.10 Lighting should always be switched on, if needed, to ensure safe working.

Reviewed, with minor modifications 16th July 2023

Ron Sinclair

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Annex A

Use of the Kitchen solely for the preparation of hot drinks and for washing of crockery

1. General Hygiene

Buxton Methodist Church is proud to maintain a high hygiene rating for its kitchen and the many church catering activities.

All users shall take care not to compromise that hygiene rating. Specifically, users of the kitchen shall not bring “outside” clothing into the kitchen and shall not place anything, such as shopping bags or handbags, on surfaces in the kitchen.

It is recommended that users take advantage of the hand-washing sink to ensure that their hands are clean before touching anything in the kitchen.

2. Use of permanent water boiler

Only the permanent water boiler should be used to obtain (nearly) boiling water. It is left permanently energised and controls should not be altered by users of the kitchen.

Careless use could lead to the user of the boiler, or others nearby, being splashed with nearly boiling water. It is, however, generally considered to be safer than the use of a free-standing kettle. Teapots, etc. should never be placed on top of the boiler. Any spillage of hot water should be dealt with immediately.

3. Washing Up

Use of the church owned crockery and cutlery is permitted on the understanding that, on conclusion, all crockery and cutlery has been adequately washed, rinsed and dried. Rinsing should be undertaken with hot water (but not straight from the hot tap) in order to assist draining and drying. Only manual washing of crockery and cutlery should be undertaken. Use of the church-owned tea towels is included and at the end of the session, dried crockery and cutlery should be returned to their home and tea towels should be hung to dry over one of the surfaces in the kitchen.

Take care when filling the sink or bowl as the temperature of water coming from the hot tap can cause scalds.

4. Accidents can happen

The church hopes that users of the premises do so safely and without incident. However, spills, etc. can happen. It is the users’ responsibility to ensure that any spillage is cleared up and the kitchen made safe for continuing use.

Any additional problems should be reported either to the church caretaker or (if no caretaker on the premises), via a note left in the mail box at the Chapel Street entrance.

Declaration

As an intending user of the Buxton Methodist Church Kitchen, I confirm that I have read and understood the general risk assessment for use of the church kitchen including the specific additional risk assessment included in Annex A, above.

I will follow all the recommendations to keep myself and others safe.

Organisation					
Date		Name (block capitals)		Signature	
Noted	Responsible Person	Name (block capitals)		Signature	

Annex B

Use of the Kitchen for more than just the preparation of hot drinks and for washing of crockery

In addition to the general risk assessment and the specific risk assessment in Annex A related to the use of the kitchen for preparation of hot drinks and the washing of crockery, the following apply to specific items of kitchen equipment:

1. Use of kitchen cutlery – knives etc.

Sharp knives and similar kitchen cutlery can pose a risk from cuts or piercing, both while hand held and when dropped. Users of such equipment shall demonstrate to the Responsible Person that they are aware of the dangers and how to mitigate them.

2. Use of Microwave Oven

Read the Instruction for Use. Use of inappropriate utensils or incorrect settings can lead to extremely hot surfaces and food.

3. Use of Dishwasher

The Dishwasher should only be used by those who have had specific training from the Responsible Person.

Surfaces either side of the dishwasher should be kept clear so that filled dishwasher trays can be slid in and out of the dishwasher. In normal use, there should be limited water spillage, but any amount should be dealt with immediately.

4. Use of toaster

The housing of the toaster can become very hot to the touch with the danger of burns to those who are careless. It is important to give proper attention to the task. Use of heat protecting gloves is encouraged.

Electrically, the high-power rating of the toaster has previously caused problems with the plug and socket. The equipment is operating within the rating of the plug and socket but, if any suspicion arises that there is a problem, use of the toaster should be discontinued and the caretaker informed (or a note posted in the Chapel Street letter box).

5. Use of cooker

The Cooker should only be used by those who have had specific training from the Responsible Person.

The cooker gas supply is interlocked with the fume hood canopy fan electrical supply, so that the cooker should not be capable of operating without the hood fan operating.

Annex B Declaration

As an intending user of the Buxton Methodist Church Kitchen, I confirm that I have read and understood the general risk assessment for use of the church kitchen including the specific additional risk assessment included in Annex A, and that I have received instruction, as necessary in respect of the items listed in Annex B and marked above.

I will follow all the recommendations to keep myself and others safe.

Organisation					
Date		Name (block capitals)		Signature	
Approved	Responsible Person	Name (block capitals)		Signature	

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Annex C

Use of cooking or food preparation equipment brought into the kitchen by the user

It should be by exception that additional cooking or food preparation equipment is brought on to the premises.

Any equipment brought from outside should be subject to a risk assessment that will be accepted by the Responsible Person.

For electrical equipment, other than domestically owned equipment, a currently valid PAT label (Portable Appliance Testing) shall be in place.

Essential points from the risk assessment, to be given below, shall be prepared by the individual who has responsibility for the equipment, and then accepted by the Responsible Person.

Equipment					
Owner					
PAT details					
Justification for use					
Outline Risk Assessment					
Organisation					
Date		Name (block capitals)		Signature	
Accepted	Responsible Person	Name (block capitals)		Signature	