



# **FIRE SAFETY POLICY**

## **Church Fire Safety Policy & Procedures**

### **Policy Statement**

St Thomas the Apostle Groombridge is committed to ensuring the safety of all staff, volunteers, worshippers, and visitors. We will conduct a regular Fire Risk Assessment to identify hazards and implement measures to reduce the risk of fire and ensure safe evacuation.

### **Responsible Persons**

- **Fire Safety Officer:** Churchwardens are responsible for annual risk assessment reviews and maintenance schedules.
- **Fire Wardens:** Churchwardens and incumbent are responsible for checking exits and assisting with any evacuations during services.

### **Fire Hazards & Prevention**

- **Candles:** Use candle snuffers, never leave candles unattended, and keep them away from flammable materials.
- **Electrical:** Fixed wiring tested every 5 years; Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) conducted annually.
- **Storage:** Flammable materials (papers, choir gowns) are not stored near heaters or electrical intake areas.

### **Emergency Procedures**

- **Upon Discovering a Fire:** Sound the alarm, call the Fire Service 999, and leave immediately.
- **Upon Hearing the Alarm:** Evacuate through the nearest exit, either the Main Door or the Vestry Door. Do not stop to collect belongings.
- **Assembly Point:** The designated assembly point is the grass area outside.
- **Disabled Evacuation:** Fire wardens will assist individuals with disabilities to designated refuge spaces or exits.

### **Equipment & Maintenance**

- **Exit Signage:** Illuminated fire exit signs are checked monthly.

- **Extinguishers:** Serviced annually. Water/CO2 extinguishers are preferred for churches to avoid damaging historic fabric.
- **Exit Routes:** Must be kept free from obstructions (chairs, banners) at all times.

**Training & Drills**

- **Drills:** Fire drills are held annually.
- **Training:** Fire safety training is provided to new staff/volunteers upon starting.

Signed .....

Fr Nicholas Henshall April 2026