

## Tiers the season to be Jolly!

**The Governments of England, Wales and Scotland have in place various restrictions which will continue to determine the way and the extent to which your parishes are able to open into the New Year. It is likely that there will not only be national differences, but local differences across your diocese, so it is important that any risk management steps you take during this time comply with the Government guidance/restrictions in your area.**

**Whilst we are all focusing on the risks posed by Covid-19, and regardless of the fact football is diminished because of the pandemic, you must not forget to ensure that, where your sites are open for any purposes, the risks associated with the time of year are adequately addressed.**

As some parts of the country have already seen the first snowfall of the winter, we hope that you find this checklist to be a useful reminder of the seasonal risk management actions you should consider.

- Visit all sites for which you are responsible and ensure that outside lights are working as they should, look out for bulbs which have blown and check that timers and security sensors are operating correctly. Light timers are easily overlooked when the clocks go back.
- Review the section of your risk assessment which considers winter weather to remind yourself of what you have stated will be done. Update the risk assessment as necessary to reflect any changes you need to make, perhaps as a result of changes to the use of the site due to Covid-19 (e.g. new one-way systems), and don't forget to consider the risks to those helping you to implement the risk assessment, such as clearing snow and ice!
- Where your winter risk assessment calls for volunteers to clear snow and grit paths, contact those who you believe have volunteered and ensure that they know the correct procedures (for example, not to use water as it will refreeze), and which areas are to be cleared and treated (this may have changed due to Covid-19). It may be that those who have previously volunteered aren't currently attending the parish due to Covid-19 and alternative plans might have to be made.
- Identify volunteers who can help to clear paths for you. To make things easier consider, for example, reducing the number of paths in use and ensuring this is clearly signed.

- Order adequate supplies of grit.
- Once you have considered which paths will be cleared and gritted as necessary in the winter months, you should communicate this at services, put notices up in the church and hall, ensure any third-party hirers of the premises communicate the plan to their groups, and also mention it in parish newsletters. The messages should remind people that they must be mindful for their own health and safety at all times and not give the impression that the paths will be cleared and gritted daily.
- If the site has multiple entrances and it is not necessary or practical to clear and grit every path and the whole car park, signs should be erected to warn people where a path hasn't been treated and direct them to a path which has. If possible, access should be prevented to paths which have not been treated.
- If the church is usually opened early in the morning, consider whether this should be delayed until the adverse weather plan can be actioned. If this is considered necessary, the change in opening times during adverse weather should be communicated.
- Take precautions against visitors bringing snow into buildings on their shoes which will melt and cause wet, slippery floors. Again, signs can be used and floor mats – but be careful to ensure these do not present a tripping hazard!
- It goes without saying that you must then take the action you have stated you will!

Please keep a record of all inspections and other risk management steps taken, ideally as part of the minutes of a relevant meeting and retained them as evidence in the event of any incidents or claims.

## *Season's Greetings*

