

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

- Takes effect from 1 October 2006.
- Applies to England and Wales
- It applies to churches, church halls and all places of worship
- It is a risk assessment based approach
- A Responsible Person must be appointed to ensure fire safety
- The Responsible Person can be more than one person e.g. the PCC
- The Responsible Person must appoint a competent person, but the competent person can be the same as the responsible person
- The Competent Person need not possess any specific qualifications but must understand the fire hazards, fire risks & relevant factors associated with occupants at special risk within the building
- A fire risk assessment must be carried out
- Consideration must be given to include property safety, fire fighter safety, neighbours and the environment around the site.
- Churches do not have to have fire exit signs, emergency lighting or outward opening doors. However, arrangements must be in place to ensure that persons can evacuate the buildings safely.
- Where 5 or more persons are employed a formal record of any significant findings and remedial measures which have or may need to be taken must be made.
- We advise a record is kept irrespective of the number of employees.
- Churches and other places of worship are covered by the guidance for Small and Medium Places of Assembly (up to 300 persons) and Large Places of Assembly (over 300 persons).
- An entry level guide "A short guide to making your premises safe from fire" is also available.
- This and all of the other guides can be downloaded from www.firesafetyguides.communities.gov.uk
- In practice there is very little change from the current situation.