

Risk Assessment Form – Highweek Tower

Name of Organisation		Assessment Undertaken By:			
Highweek Church Bellringers		Robert D S Brown (Tower Captain)			
Address					
Highweek Parish Church , Exeter Road , Highweek Village , Devon					
Postcode		TQ12 1QN			
Date		Review Date			
18/09/2025		18/10/2028 or sooner if issue identified			
Area Assessed					
Church Tower – Bell Ringing Chamber, & Maintenance of Bells (not access to roof or other work)					
Risk Details					
Under additional controls you should note the additional measures that are needed to reduce the risk to an acceptable level and record when they have been implemented.					
Hazards/risks/ persons affected	Existing controls	Likelihood (L)	Severity (S)	Risk Rating (L x S)	Additional Controls
Falling from Ladder between intermediate Chamber and bell chamber	Access to work on bells is authorised by tower captain only, no lone working allowed	1	2	2	

Uneven steps between ground floor and intermediate chamber	Access by authorised personnel only, responsibility when individuals access the tower to wear suitable footwear and advised of uneven state of tower steps	2	2	4	Notice to be place at Bottom of tower steps advising care when going up tower
Trapdoor to ringing chamber, use and access - The door is exceptionally heavy and difficult to open from below when shut due to weight creating risk of injury	Closing of door monitored whilst bells being rung	1	3	3	Trap door to be left open when no ringing Barrier to be put across bottom of stairs. When ringers not present Warning sign to be displayed on wall at bottom of stairs stating restricted access Bells must never be left in the up position when not attended

Contractors/Visitors leaving bells in potentially dangerous state		1	2	2	Tower Captain to agree access by all bell maintenance contractors and visiting ringers' bells to be left down at all times.
Fire	In case of fire ringers to evacuate tower immediately, door between area under ringing chamber and church to be kept shut to restrict spread of fire. Fire extinguishers in Tower	1	3	3	Fire extinguishers subject to regular testing
Person falling ill whilst in the ringing chamber	Notice in tower giving direction to first aid kit, and location of nearest defibrillator. All those running ringing events to be aware of locations and procedures to follow.	1	2	2	
Unauthorised Access to tower – falls, swinging bells etc.		2	2	2	Access to tower tightly controlled no access without permission of Tower Captain, Churchwarden or, Vicar.

Power failure		1	2	2	Consideration should be given to fitting emergency lighting in Ringing Chamber, in the interim battery powered LED lights available if bells are be rung during hours of darkness.
Slipping/Falling from Frame or on steps	No lone working in tower by volunteers all work to be agreed and overseen by tower captain	1	2	2	
Non ringer gaining access pulling a bell whilst up.		1	2	3	In rare event of bells being up all ropes to be on rope spider out of reach, warning sign to be placed on spider. This should be a rare occurrence as bells must not be left up whilst unattended.

Checking/Working on a bell when up	Working on a bell which is up by a volunteer has to be with the express permission of the Tower Captain and will only be done so in exceptional circumstances and where there is no other option.	1	3	3	
Mishandling of Rope when being taught	Only Teachers approved by the Tower Captain to engage in teaching of new recruits.	1	2	2	
Rope breaking and flailing around causing injury	Ropes are subject to regular inspection in addition current ropes have PSP tops which are exceptionally hard wearing	1	2	2	

Rope Catching on objects/clothing	All object to be a safe distance Clothing to be checked by tower captain / person leading the ringing.	1	2	2	All object to be a safe distance Clothing to be checked by tower captain / person leading the ringing.
Breaking a Stay		2	2	2	Training & Warnings – stays to be inspected after any heavy hits and as part of regular bell Maintenance.
Children's behaviour during ringing/tuition.		1	2	2	Ensure 2 adults always present. Get permission to ring form for all new minor students and parent contact details. Compliance with CCCBR guidance on Child Protection Adherence to code of conduct by all
Child Protection whilst teaching young persons to ring		1	2	2	All regular tutors to be DBS checked in line with guidelines. If teaching of young person's take place. At no time must an adult be left alone with a young person
Noise from ringing bells both in tower and whilst checking bells	Noise in ringing chamber within acceptable level, no person should be in amongst the bells when ringing, save where a maintenance issue requires this to happen, such access would be very limited and tightly controlled by Tower Captain	1	2	2	No access to tower when bells are being rung other than with express permission of the Tower Captain or for purposes of bell maintenance.

Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating
1 = Low (seldom)	1 = Low (minor cuts and bruises)	1-2 = Low Priority
2 = Medium (frequently)	2 = Medium (serious injury or incapacitated for 3 days or more)	3-4 = Medium Priority
3 = High (certain or near certain)	3 = High (fatality or a number of persons seriously injured)	6-9 = High Priority

This risk assessment is prepared by the Tower Captain and has been compiled in good faith, it is given gratuitously and without reward and no liability can be accepted either by the author in respect of the contents of the report and advice.

Prepared by

Robert D S Brown BA(Hons)

Date.....18.09.2025.....