

# Newton Mearns Baptist Church

## Stewarding Policy

### Aim

Newton Mearns Baptist Church (NMBC) is committed to enabling public worship while ensuring the safety and security of all attendees at events held on the church premises, as well as ensuring that the fabric of the building is protected and secure, all with a sense of order and reverence to God.

### Purpose

A Stewarding Team is generally appointed for events within the church building which will have a large number of attendees, for example, Sunday morning services, Sunday evening services, funerals, etc.

The purpose of the Stewarding Team is to have overall control of the church building, ensure the smooth operation of the event, and deal with any issues or emergencies that may arise. As such, all members of the Stewarding Team shall be familiar with the NMBC Fire Safety Policy & Procedures.

Stewards serve a fundamentally different purpose from the Welcome Team, who are there to greet people as they arrive, identify people who are new or visiting, and try to make them feel welcome. However, stewarding clearly plays an important role in facilitating worship and providing a good welcome to visitors, and so all members of the Stewarding Team should be mindful of this when interacting with all attendees.

### Arranging Stewarding

A Stewarding Team for regular church events, such as weekly services, shall be arranged by the NMBC Office through the Planning Centre Services app.

Not all events held on the church premises will require a Stewarding Team to be appointed. The need for this shall be identified within the Event Booking Form. The Event Organiser for a standalone event shall have responsibility for arranging for a suitably sized Stewarding Team to be in attendance.

There is no rule around the size of the Stewarding Team required for an event; however, those appointed must be able to deal with all eventualities which could reasonably be expected, including a full building evacuation. As guidance, examples of the minimum size of Stewarding Team required for regular events are included below:

- Sunday morning service: One Head Steward, plus an additional four Stewards
- Sunday evening service: One Head Steward, plus an additional two Stewards

These examples are included as guidance only, and the stewarding requirements for any standalone event shall be considered by the Event Organiser, Worship Leader and/or Preacher in collaboration with the Head Steward, taking into consideration the nature of the

event, the number of expected attendees, and the relative experience and confidence of the appointed Stewards.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Head Stewards

The Head Steward's primary responsibility is to have overall control of the church building for the duration of the event, ensuring the safety and security of all attendees.

- Review the Service Order, including the 'Stewards Instructions' section, and speak to the Event Organiser, Worship Leader and/or Preacher prior to the event to understand any last-minute changes.
- Open the church building, as per the Key Holder Policy.
- Ensure that all lighting required for the smooth and safe operation of an event is working as intended. For evening events, this includes checking outside lighting around the building and in the car park. If any lighting is not working, suitable measures shall be put in place to mitigate any risk that this presents. This shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Head Steward.
- Ensure that the clipboard at the front door of the church is completed, as required.
- Arrange for the partitions between the Sanctuary, Oasis area, and Games Hall to be opened or locked closed, as required.
- Assign roles and responsibilities to the Stewards on duty for the event. For a church service, this includes allocating each Steward an area of the Sanctuary to direct people to seats, and what to do in the event of an emergency, including a full building evacuation.
- For a Sunday morning service, ensure that there is at least one steward assigned to each aisle, including the middle aisle.
- Allocate a Steward to each fire door and ensure that they sit close to that door so that they can open it in the event of an emergency.
- Familiarise themselves with the Order of Service and communicate any items of note to the Stewarding Team. For example, highlighting when the children and young people will leave the service, if/when the children and young people will re-join the service, communion arrangements, etc.
- Remain in the Vestibule or Oasis area during any event in the Sanctuary, such that they are within sight and sound of the front doors and able to react to any issues, as required.
- Be familiar with where First Aid kits and defibrillators are located and identify suitably trained First Aiders or medically trained professionals who are in attendance who may be able to provide assistance in the event of a medical emergency.
- Arrange for the Offering Box to be moved to the Office after a church service and prior to locking up the building.
- Confirm to Stewards when they can leave, i.e. once the Head Steward is comfortable that the event has ended, and the building is under control.
- Close and lock the church building, as per the Key Holder Policy.
- If there is another event on in the building, for example a Leadership meeting or YF, the Head Steward should close and lock the front doors and advise the group left in the building to finish locking up the building when there are leaving.

- If, for any reason, the Head Steward must leave the premises during an event, a replacement Head Steward shall be appointed before they leave, and this shall be communicated to the Event Organiser, Worship Leader and/or Preacher. This shall be someone familiar with the roles and responsibilities of the Head Steward detailed in this policy, and able to sufficiently discharge those duties.

### Stewards

The Steward's primary responsibility is to provide support to the Head Steward, ensure that attendees at the event are suitably seated, and that safety within the building is maintained.

- Report to the Head Steward prior to the event to receive a briefing and instructions on any specific arrangements about the service, for example, when the children and young people will leave the service, if/when the children and young people will re-join the service, communion arrangements, etc.
- Make every effort to ensure that attendees are feel welcome while interacting with them, such as when showing them to a seat, for example.
- Proactively seat attendees within their allocated area of the Sanctuary, directing them to fill spaces so that empty spaces are generally on the outside of the row.
- Keep track of spaces available within their allocated area of the Sanctuary and communicate this with the wider Stewarding Team as the Sanctuary is getting close to capacity.
- During services, Stewards should sit on an aisle seat towards the rear of the Sanctuary so that they are easily contactable by the Head Steward, if required.
- If allocated a fire door, ensure that they sit close to it so that they can open it in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure that all emergency exits are kept clear throughout the event.
- If sitting near to either of the doors into the sanctuary, open and close them for any attendees looking to leave or join the sanctuary. Aim to have the doors open for as short a time as possible so that noise from other parts of the building does not distract those within the sanctuary.
- Only let people back into the sanctuary at an appropriate time, i.e. not during a prayer, for example. This includes when parents and guardians are coming back into the sanctuary after taking children to their groups.
- Aim to ensure that good order is kept within the sanctuary and offer support to anyone looking for assistance.
- Report to the Head Steward before leaving the event.

### Medical Incidents

It is possible that an attendee could become unwell or there could be a medical emergency during an event. During any medical incident, it is critical that all members of the Stewarding Team do not focus on the individual who is unwell, as the general safety and security of the building and other attendees must be maintained.

There is a fundamental difference between someone being unwell and a medical emergency. If someone is unwell, the priority should be to ensure that they have the support that they need so that the event/service can continue as planned. In a medical

emergency (i.e. the use of CPR or a defibrillator is required, for example), the priority is the casualty rather than the event service.

Three scenarios are outlined below which cover a range of possible incidents and potential responses from the Stewarding Team:

1. If the person is able and willing to leave the sanctuary, the Stewarding Team shall offer support and ensure that they have everything that they need.
2. If the person requires assistance to leave the sanctuary, the Stewarding Team shall offer the use of the wheelchair.
3. If the person is unable to leave the sanctuary, the Head Steward shall advise the Worship Leader and/or Preacher to pause the service while this is arranged. Depending on the particular circumstances, consideration should be given to removing all other attendees from the sanctuary.

If any medical incident occurs, the Stewarding Team should seek the support of a medically trained professional or First Aider. There are several doctors and trained First Aiders who attend NMBC regularly, and the following information assumes that at least one of them will be in attendance and willing to assist. If there is no one suitable in attendance who can assist, or if the Stewarding Team is in any doubt, then an ambulance should be called.

In situations where someone becomes unwell, the Stewarding Team shall:

- Be guided by the person who is unwell and anyone administering First Aid about helping the person out of the sanctuary. The person administering First Aid is likely to be best placed to advise on the most appropriate action to take.
- Seek to prevent too many people from crowding around the person, where possible.
- Arrange for the person who is unwell to have access to a private area, assuming that they are able to leave the sanctuary, so that appropriate help can be given or arranged, including:
  - Medical attention
  - Recovery and/or rest
  - Car and/or ambulance
- Advise the Worship Leader and/or Preacher if the person is unable to leave the sanctuary and unable to be moved. In this situation, the Head Steward should decide whether all other attendees should be asked to leave the sanctuary and go to the Oasis area, Vestibule or Games Hall. In this situation, the Head Steward should discuss with the Worship Leader and/or Preacher about whether the service can continue, and how best to advise other attendees. In this scenario, it is important to ensure that there are members of the Stewarding Team providing support to those attendees who have left the sanctuary, given that this would be a highly unusual and potentially emotional situation.