THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Parish of Salisbury St Mark & Laverstock St Andrew

St Mark St Andrew
SERVING JESUS, EACH OTHER, OUR WORLD

Risk assessment:
Disturbance During a Sunday Service

Activity: Service
Location: St Mark's Church & St Andrew's Church
Name of Team with responsibility: PCC

Date of first risk assessment: October 2026
Time/frequency: Sunday and Midweek Services
Date to be reviewed: October 2027 or post incident

What are the hazards/risks?	Who might be harmed/effected and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
1 - Minor disruption caused by noise or activity whilst the service in progress e.g. getting a coffee noisy children late arrivals people speaking	Congregation and service leaders may be distracted or feel uncomfortable and it may affect their ability to worship.	In a desire to welcome all we aim to be hands off and let people interact as they like. Specific concerns have been taken to leadership meetings for discussion and action by wardens and vicar. - e.g. St Mark's discouraging use of table tennis during the post service Holy Communion. St Mark's provides Sunday Club for children, and a creche. St Andrew's provides toys in the side aisle.	St Andrew's hasn't had any incidents to note, sometimes active children have been encouraged to interact with toys in the side aisle. St Mark's often has minor disturbances sometimes from children running around (which is difficult to legislate against). Similarly with people speaking out loud or doing distracting things. It is a nature of meeting in a large group and a large space. Make sure the creche is available, and notice is given about it (this could be a written notice). St Mark's could close the coffee station during the service.	Sunday Wardens at St Mark's Churchwardens and Incumbent	When the assessment has been finalised/ October 2026 to communicate to serving personnel.	

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2- An individual/s causes disturbance during the service by raising their voice above the leader/preacher.	Congregation and service leaders may be distracted or feel uncomfortable and it may affect people's ability to worship. It could impact on the service continuing and cause anxiety.	We seek generally to minimise attention given to any particular outbursts (which seem rarely intended to cause harm). Other responses have included the person being approached gently by someone known to them, to be spoken to, or sometimes being invited to go outside the meeting and talk alone. This depends on someone confident enough to do this. The Church Wardens are collectively responsible for orderly worship. Ordinarily one is always present every Sunday.	Welcomers/Sidespeople to remain near the main door to monitor access to church and pick up any issues early. Sunday Wardens to identify an appropriate person to get alongside and respond appropriately (with view to diffusing the situation). If the language being used is offensive or causing significant disturbance which impacts in the service continuing, for the preacher/leader/clergy is to introduce a pause, perhaps move onto the next or previous hymn, during which time someone to approach the person to offer help/ listen. St Mark's might considering appointing a 'NOAH' team of regular church attendees who can 'Notice, Observe And Help'. Sunday Wardens to inform a NOAH member if they have some concerns.	Welcome Teams Sunday Warden Service Leader / Preacher / Clergy MALT to consider this.	When the assessment has been finalised/ October 2026 to communicate to serving personnel. Next MALT meeting.	As above

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3 – An individual/s comes to the front and causes significant disturbance to the service, attempts to take over, or causes anxiety to those actively involved at the front.	All attending the service and potentially any online hearing their words.	The service leader or preacher would be expected to take control of the situation. The Church Wardens are collectively responsible for orderly worship. Ordinarily one is always present every Sunday.	This could be done by turning off the microphones, stepping away from the front, putting on some music from the sound desk… whilst someone comes alongside them to diffuse the situation. A song could be sung during the process. The service could be paused, or cancelled and send everyone home.	Communicate actions with service leaders.	ASAP or at the next team meeting.	
4 - An individual/s behave/s in a verbally or physically threatening way towards others or threatens the safety of all. Including Terrorist Threat.	All present	No incident to date.	Immediately stop the service, put some music on from the back, and approach them to assist, if necessary ask people to leave and call 999.	Leader of service makes an announcement. And leader / warden makes the emergency call.		

When this guidance is completed or the contents to be shared with SALT/MALT/PCC members, the church administrator, preachers and leaders, children and young peoples leaders and the Sunday Wardens.

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