**Health and Safety at Work Act 2015**

(effective from 4 April 2016)

**Implications for Parishes**

This new legislation highlights the need for accountability and Health and Safety becomes the responsibility of all of us to ensure everyone within our Parish network is kept safe.

It is important that parishes know about the law and have systems in place to eliminate or minimise the risk of harm or injury. This manual sets out explanations and templates to assist in this endeavour.

The Standing Committee of the Diocese has published a Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines. The policy is reproduced here please take the time to familiarise yourself with this Document (see Page 3). The other material will be held by the Dean, Regional Deans or Priest in Charge who can supply a copy on request.

One of the changes from the previous Health and Safety Act 1992 to this Act is the definition of accountability within organisations. There has been some confusion about how this works in our Anglican Church structure. Please see below an explanation of the various roles.

Diocese – **PCBU**

Diocesan Manager, Deans, Archdeacons, Regional Deans **– Officers**

Parish – **PCBU**

Parish Clergy & Vestry – **Officers**

Workers, Volunteers, Congregation, Contractors

**Definitions**:

**PCBU** (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking)

The primary responsibility for health and safety now rests on a PCBU. Once you are classed as a PCBU you have legal obligations to all those covered by the Act, not just your employees.

**Officers**

An officer is a person or body who holds a very senior leadership position, the Act places a new duty on officers who significantly influence the management of the Church, to carry out due diligence to ensure the Parish meets its health and safety obligations. An officer can be held liable for failure to meet this duty.

**Workers, Volunteers, Contractors and Congregation**

A worker is a person who carries out any work for a PCBU including work as an employee, a contractor and volunteer. Please see separate section detailing information on contractors employed by a Parish.

Parish Congregations must comply so far as reasonably able with instructions that enable the PCBU to comply with the law and co-operate with any reasonable health and safety policy or procedure.