

ST AUGUSTINE of CANTERBURY, WHITTON

Key Holder Policy



The Parochial Church Council of St Augustine of Canterbury (the PCC) having reviewed the security of the Church Property have decided to introduce a Policy for issuing Keys.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of people using the buildings of St Augustine's Church and to protect the resources God has provided. From the date of publication of this Policy the issuing of keys will be controlled and accounted for by implementing the following steps:

- Keep to the minimum the number of people who hold keys.
- Maintain a list of all those who have security keys.
- Records to be held centrally by a Nominated Churchwarden.
- Nominated Churchwarden to ensure all keys are signed in and out, as necessary
- All keyholders to ensure that keys are securely stored and returned when no longer needed.
- The procurement and copying of keys to be managed centrally.

The number of keyholders for the Church and/or the Church Hall will therefore be limited to:

- The Incumbent
- The Churchwardens
- The Assistant Churchwarden(s)
- The Sacristan
- The Director of Music
- Homelink: Keys in case of evacuation (held in a secure lockbox)
- Church Hall: Keys will be available to any Leaseholder occupying the hall on 5 days a week.

The person receiving the key(s) shall indicate agreement with this policy by signing the Key book, which shall include:

- Key Type
- Person's name
- Contact phone number
- Position or reason for having key
- Date key issued
- Person issuing key

Use of a Key

The person possessing a key to the church agrees that the key will remain under his or her control, and that the key is to be used in the performance of the ministry of St Augustine's church.

The person possessing a key will follow the Church Opening and Closing instructions as attached to this policy when he or she is the first one in the building on a given day; or the last one out of the building.

Return of a key

A key must be returned to the Nominated Churchwarden or the Incumbent if any of the following occur:

- The holder of the key is no longer a member of the church or the community served by the church.
- The holder is no longer in the position for which the key was issued.
- The return of the key is requested by the Incumbent or a Churchwarden.
- When the holder is unable to attend church and the absence is likely to be prolonged then arrangements should be made for the temporary return of the keys.

Upon return of a key, the Churchwarden will annotate the appropriate entry in the Key book. To provide better control of the keys, if a key holder changes positions, an annotation shall be made in the Key book indicating the change in reason for being issued a key.

This policy will amend the current arrangements for entry/exit of building and the new process is set out in the attached document.

Arrangements for Entering/Exiting Church Buildings

1. Church Opening and Closing Procedure

a. Entering the building when no one else in the building:

- i. If there is any sign of forced entry, fire or other criminal or unsafe conditions, leave the building and call 999 from either a mobile phone or a neighbouring house/business. Inform the Incumbent and wait for help to arrive and do not enter the building.
- ii. If there is a problem and it is not unsafe, eg burst pipes, then stabilise the condition, as best you are able, and contact the Incumbent or Duty Churchwarden – leaving a telephone message if that is the only option.

b. Closing the building

- i. Check that the north door and grill are locked.
- ii. Check that doors to vestries are locked.
- iii. Check all areas to ensure everybody has left the building
- iv. Ensure that the heating is switched off
- v. Ensure that all lights are off
- vi. Check that internal doors in Narthex are closed
- vii. Check main doors are latched (top and bottom door)
- viii. Ensure that door is locked using both keys.
- ix. If anything unusual occurs whilst locking up or there is anything unusual in the car park:
 1. If there is any sign of forced entry, fire or other criminal or unsafe conditions, leave the building and call 999 from either a mobile phone or a neighbouring house/business. Inform the incumbent and wait for help to arrive and move to an area where you feel safe.
 2. If there is a problem and it is not unsafe, eg burst pipes, then stabilise the condition, as best you are able , and contact the Incumbent or Duty Churchwarden – leaving a telephone message if that is the only option.

2. In addition to the standard arrangements all key holders must follow and instructions in the COVID Risk Assessment appropriate at the time.

3. **Access to Church for non-keyholders** – people who need access to the church should contact Fr John to arrange a mutual time when the church can be opened; if there is an urgent need to access the building when he is not available then a Churchwarden should be contacted.

4. Access to Church Hall for non-keyholders –

- a. Thursday Brownies: collect the key from the Vicarage between 5.50pm and 6.00pm; if there is no meeting at 7.30pm lock the hall and return the key to the vicarage (post key through Vicarage letter box).
- b. Thursday Group: if a meeting is scheduled for 7.30pm then the Brownies will transfer the key to the Hirer, who will lock the hall at the end of their meeting and return the key to the vicarage (post key through Vicarage letter box).
- c. Friday Youth Groups: Rainbows Group to collect the key from the Vicarage at 4.45pm; the key will then be transferred to the Brownies and on to the Guides. At the end of their meeting the Guides (post key through Vicarage letter box).

NOTE: Any Group cancelling a scheduled meeting will need to inform other users so that arrangements can be made to ensure access is available.