

# Duties of a Sidesperson

*This is a summary and expansion of the legal duties which are listed over the page.*



"To win people for Christ and to build them up in Christ."  
www.stjameschorley.org Registered Charity No. 1130725

## In advance

1. Check the rota
2. Ensure that you have swapped or someone has taken your place if you cannot be there.

## Arrival

1. Arrive about half an hour before the service.
2. Make sure that the vestry door is unlocked but bolted and that the G-Force room fire exit is not hindered.
3. Ensure that the collection plates are at the back of church.
4. Ensure that the layout of the Church is as required for the service and everywhere is neat and tidy.
5. In cold weather ensure that the path is safe.

## Welcome

1. Welcome people as they arrive.
2. If people seem unsure what to do show them to a seat and if possible introduce them to someone sitting nearby.
3. Hand out any books or papers as necessary.

## During the Service

1. Assist the wardens in maintaining good order in the service.
2. Take the collection plates round and then to the front at the appropriate point.
3. Ensure that the two gates are shut about 5 minutes after the start of service

## After the service

1. Ensure that any books are collected in and in as much as possible that the church is left in a suitable state for the next event.
2. Invite visitors to stay for refreshments and to a magazine, term card or other such literature.

## In the event of a fire

1. There should be a warden or deputy and two sidespeople on duty for any main service. If there are not three people on duty ensure that a third person is asked to take on this responsibility.
2. The warden or deputy should take responsibility for the main door.
3. One sidesperson should endeavour to take responsibility for the vestry door and one for the G-force door. Ensure that people exit safely and sensibly through the door and any needing help are assisted to get to the fire assembly point.
4. If possible shut the door when everyone has left the building.
5. If there is a fire whilst children are in their groups then off duty sidespeople are asked to assist the group leaders in getting children out of the building to the assembly point, marshalling them until the register has been checked and ensuring that they are handed over safely to their parent or other adult responsible for them on the day.  
Adults are to assemble on the grass by the war memorial, children's groups on the opposite side of the path to ensure the safety of the children.

May 2012

## Legalities

### **E2 Of sidesmen or assistants to the churchwardens**

1. The sidesmen of the parish shall be appointed by the annual parochial church meeting or, if need arises between annual parochial church meetings, by the parochial church council.
2. No person whose name is not on the church electoral roll is eligible as a sidesman, but all persons whose names are on the roll are so eligible.
3. It shall be the duty of the sidesmen to promote the cause of true religion in the parish and to assist the churchwardens in the discharge of their duties in maintaining order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of divine service.

### **F15 Of churches not to be profaned**

1. The churchwardens and their assistants shall not suffer the church or chapel to be profaned by any meeting therein for temporal objects inconsistent with the sanctity of the place, nor the bells to be rung at any time contrary to the direction of the minister.
2. They shall not suffer any person so to behave in the church, church porch, or churchyard during the time of divine service as to create disturbance. They shall also take care that nothing be done therein contrary to the law of the Church or of the Realm.
3. If any person be guilty of riotous, violent or indecent behaviour in any church, chapel, or churchyard, whether in any time of divine service or not, or of disturbing, vexing, troubling, or misusing any minister officiating therein, the said churchwardens or their assistants shall take care to restrain the offender and if necessary proceed against him according to law.

“A delicate balance needs to be maintained now that the right to freedom of expression under the European Convention on Human Rights has a place in English domestic law.”

*Mark Hill : Ecclesiastical Law 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Para 3.50*

Any person on the electoral roll may be a sidesman. Sidesmen must therefore be 16 years of age or older.  
*Church Representation Rules 2011*