

St Albans Mencap

Charity number: 210073

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Fire Safety Policy:

This Fire Safety Policy sets out how St Albans Mencap (SAM) prevents, manages, and responds to fire risks to protect children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and visitors.

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1.0			

Summary of changes:

Version:	Changes:
1.0	Drafted January 2026

1. Purpose

This Fire Safety Policy sets out how St Albans Mencap (SAM) prevents, manages, and responds to fire risks to protect children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and visitors.

Fire Safety is a core compliance requirement and is supported by SAM's governance systems and related policies listed in the policy index and the organisation's strategic governance approach.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All SAM settings, offices, rented spaces, community activity locations, events, and programme delivery sites.
- All employees, volunteers, trustees, agency workers, contractors, and visitors.

TCP (Trinity Community Project) follows SAM's policies but remains operationally separate. Its implementation requirements are contained in **Appendix 1**.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy supports SAM's duties under:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

This aligns with SAM's wider compliance framework documented across SAM policies, including safeguarding, risk management, behaviour, staff code expectations, and H&S items embedded within the organisational policy index.

4. Related SAM Policies

This policy must be read alongside relevant SAM policies. These demonstrate SAM's commitment to safe environments, risk management, and statutory compliance.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 SAM Board of Trustees

The SAM Board of Trustees approves this policy and ensures it is reviewed annually, in accordance with the governance requirements outlined in SAM's strategic plan.

5.2 Senior Leadership / Responsible Person

The Senior Leadership or Responsible Person is responsible for ensuring that Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) are completed, reviewed, and acted upon as necessary. They must

also ensure that training is provided, equipment is serviced, corrective actions are implemented, and ongoing monitoring takes place. Furthermore, it is their duty to confirm that all SAM buildings comply with fire safety obligations.

5.3 Fire Marshals (All SAM Locations)

Each SAM setting is required to appoint Fire Marshals. Fire Marshals must complete fire safety training and maintain monitoring records in accordance with SAM's policy structure. They are also responsible for carrying out evacuations and assisting people who require support.

5.4 All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers are required to complete fire safety induction and refresher training, comply with local evacuation procedures, and report hazards immediately.

5.5 Contractors and Visitors

Contractors and visitors must adhere to SAM's fire safety instructions as part of the organisation's safe working expectations.

6. Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs)

SAM requires that Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) are conducted annually for every SAM site. Additionally, an earlier review must be undertaken if there has been a refurbishment, a change in service, an incident, or an identified risk. All actions arising from the FRA must be recorded, monitored, and completed within agreed timeframes.

FRA and risk-based planning are aligned with SAM's governance and risk monitoring approach, as well as the strategic risk oversight described in the governance documentation.

7. Fire Prevention Measures

SAM staff will maintain clear escape routes, control combustible materials and ignition sources, and ensure that all electrical equipment is safe to use and tested in accordance with organisational procedures. Safe storage and housekeeping will be upheld across all SAM settings, with all staff adhering to behavioural and safeguarding policies to maintain a secure environment. Furthermore, SAM staff will actively adopt and comply with the site-specific fire risk assessment as determined and agreed upon in the school's assessment for the site.

8. Fire Detection, Warning and Firefighting Equipment

Responsibility for servicing fire alarms, detection systems, extinguishers, blankets, and emergency lighting rests entirely with the landlord, who must ensure that these systems

are regularly maintained, inspected, and replaced as needed. Any faults identified should be promptly reported by SAM staff, but it is the landlord's duty to resolve and escalate these issues as required. As tenants, SAM staff depend on the landlord's full compliance with all legal and safety obligations, ensuring the site's Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is thorough and current. During site use, SAM staff will follow the requirements set out in the landlord's FRA and maintain safe working practices throughout their occupancy.

These arrangements are consistent with SAM's broader health and safety obligations as described in the organisation's policy index.

9. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Each SAM setting must have a **location-specific evacuation procedure** that includes:

- Raising the alarm
- Evacuation routes
- Assembly point locations
- Roles of Fire Marshals
- Assistance for people with disabilities
- Protocols for visitors and contractors
- Procedures for children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- Use of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

These procedures support the safeguarding and duty-of-care expectations found across SAM safeguarding and behaviour policies.

10. Training and Competence

All staff and volunteers are required to receive fire safety induction before commencing work, refresh their training on an annual basis, and take part in regular evacuation drills. Staff members who are designated as Fire Marshals at each site will receive additional, specialist training to ensure they can fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Every SAM setting will have trained Fire Marshals available as part of their emergency response arrangements.

These arrangements align with SAM's organisation-wide training obligations set out in behaviour, safeguarding, and performance policies.

11. Record-Keeping

SAM must retain comprehensive records that include Fire Risk Assessments, tracking of FRA actions, logs of fire drills, Fire Marshal checklists, records of fire equipment

servicing, training documentation, and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). Record-keeping expectations are consistent with the governance standards.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. Fire safety performance will be monitored through FRA reviews, training completion, and drill results. Issues will be escalated to senior leadership and the Board where required.

APPENDIX 1: TCP FIRE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION

(Operationally separate but aligned to SAM policies)

TCP (Trinity Community Project) must follow all core principles of this SAM Fire Safety Policy, reflecting its duty to apply SAM's safeguarding, health, and safety frameworks as indicated in joint policies.

TCP-specific requirements

TCP must ensure:

Fire Risk Assessments Each TCP location must have a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) conducted annually, and any actions identified within the assessment must be completed promptly.

Local Evacuation Procedures TCP is required to maintain localised evacuation procedures for each venue, such as Homewood Road, Friends Meeting House, and other community locations. It is essential that all staff, volunteers, and members are familiar with their specific roles during an evacuation.

Training TCP staff and volunteers are required to complete fire safety training that is fully aligned with SAM standards. In addition, every session must have designated individuals assigned to Fire Marshal-equivalent roles.

Support for Members TCP is responsible for identifying any members who may require assistance during an evacuation and must implement Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) where necessary. During emergencies, safeguarding expectations outlined in the SAM safeguarding policies continue to apply.

Record Keeping TCP is required to maintain comprehensive record keeping, which includes attendance registers, drill logs, equipment checklists, training records, and documentation of fire safety communications.

Facilities and Equipment It is essential to ensure that fire exits remain unobstructed during all activities, such as cooking, arts, or dance sessions. In addition, compliance with the fire equipment and alarm systems provided by the host venue must always be maintained.

Communication and Partnership TCP must work collaboratively with SAM leadership to ensure that any fire safety issues are escalated in an appropriate manner. Additionally, any venue-specific concerns or problems must be reported immediately.

APPENDIX 2: Fire Marshal Handbook for SAM and TCP

1. Introduction

Fire Marshals play a critical role in ensuring the safety of everyone at SAM services and TCP sessions. This handbook sets out clear duties, expectations, and procedures for Fire Marshals across both organisations.

The handbook supports and works alongside:

- All SAM policies listed
- SAM safeguarding and behaviour policies
- TCP safeguarding and operational expectations

2. Role of a Fire Marshal

Fire Marshals support fire safety by preventing hazards, ensuring safe evacuation, and helping protect children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

A Fire Marshal is responsible for:

- **Proactive safety checks**
- **Supporting emergency evacuation**
- **Coordinating with staff and external services**
- **Ensuring records are completed**
- **Helping people who need assistance**
- **Reporting risks and defects**

Fire Marshals **do not** fight fires except in very small, safe, contained situations and only if trained and it is safe to do so.

3. Key Responsibilities

A. Before a Fire or Drill (Preventative Duties)

Daily/Sessional Checks

- **Ensure escape routes are clear.**
- **Check exit doors can be easily opened.**
- **Ensure fire alarm call points are visible and accessible.**
- **Confirm fire extinguishers are in place and not obstructed.**
- **Confirm staff, volunteers, and session leaders are aware of evacuation procedures.**
- **Identify any children, members, or adults needing assistance (e.g., PEEPs).**

These checks align with SAM's policy duties for safe environments.

Setting-Specific Fire Information

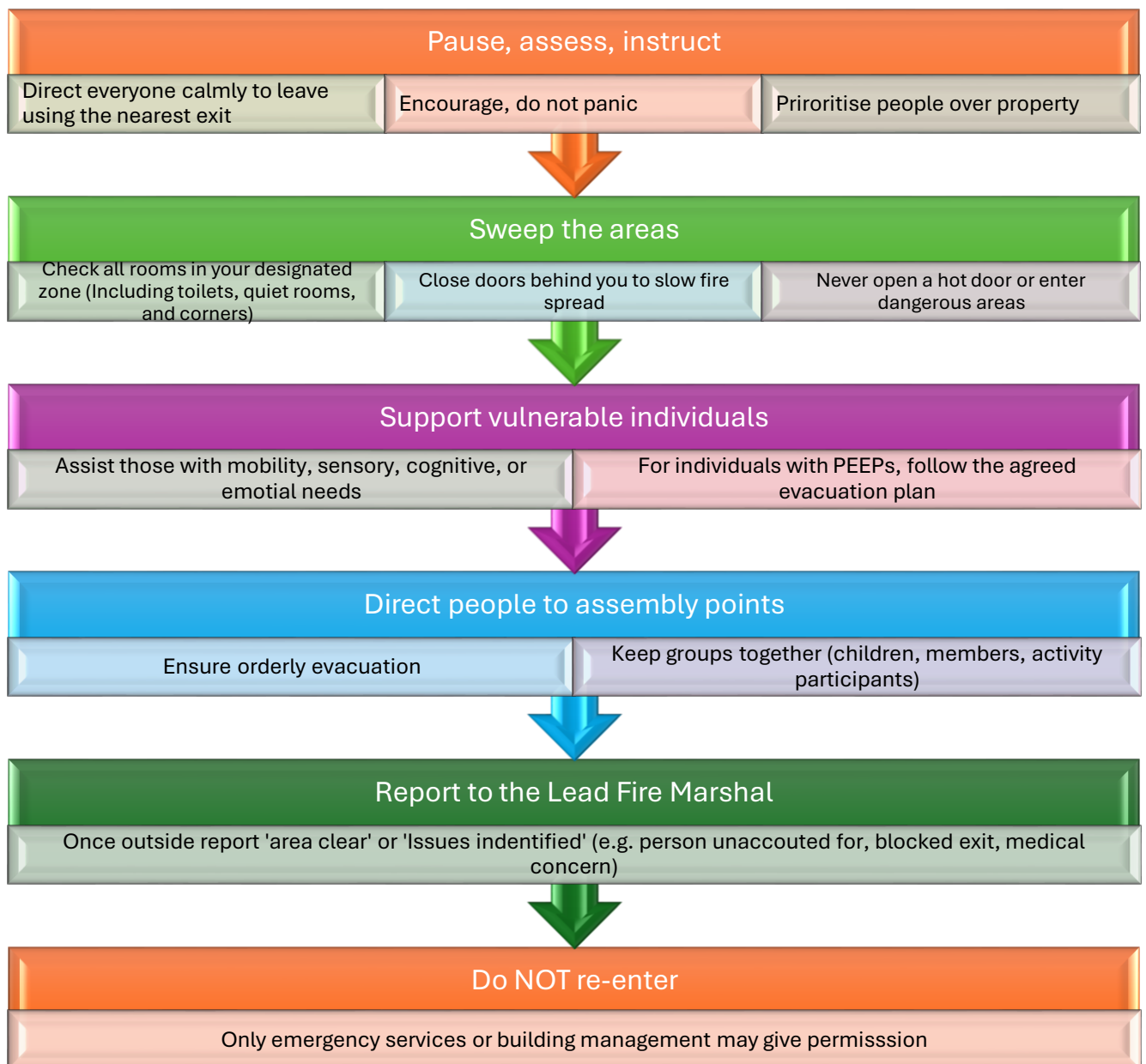
Fire Marshals must know:

- **The fire alarm sound**
- **All evacuation routes**
- **All assembly point locations**
- **Any fire safety restrictions in the venue**
- **Whether the venue has special systems (e.g., refuge points)**

This is especially important for TCP activities held across multiple venues.

B. During a Fire or Drill (Emergency Duties)

When the alarm sounds:



C. After a Fire or Drill (Follow-Up Duties)

Fire Marshals must ensure the attendance list is cross-checked. Any issues that arise should be logged and communicated to leadership. If there are any concerns regarding equipment, these must be reported promptly. Venues used by TCP are required to pass information back to the SAM lead office where necessary. Additionally, if any behaviour or risk concerns arise, a report should be made.

4. Fire Marshal Equipment Checklist

Fire Marshals may use:

- **High-visibility vest**
- **Torch (for low-light evacuation)**
- **List of all attendees/service users present**
- **PEEPs folder or local notes**
- **Venue-specific fire safety information**
- **Radio or phone (if part of the setting's system)**

TCP venues may have varying equipment depending on host building arrangements.

5. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

A PEEP is required for any individual who may need extra support. Fire Marshals should:

- Know who has a PEEP
- Know the specific assistance required
- Never lift individuals unless trained and safe to do so
- Communicate needs immediately if an evacuation happens

PEEP responsibilities connect to safeguarding and duty-of-care expectations reflected across SAM policies.

6. Communication Protocols

During an incident

- **Communicate clearly and calmly.**
- **Use radios/phones only for essential updates.**
- **Keep messages short (“Area clear”, “Assist required”, “Blocked exit”).**

After an incident

Fire Marshals must report:

- **Any obstacles during evacuation**
- **Missing persons**
- **Staff/volunteer concerns**

- **Behaviour concerns**
- **Broken equipment**
- **Venue issues (important for TCP's multi-venue operations)**

TCP team leaders must refer updates to SAM operations oversight as required.

7. Fire Drills

Fire Marshals must:

- Participate in all drills.
- Help plan them where needed.
- Record drill outcomes (time to evacuate, issues, attendance).
- Help improve procedures after each drill.

SAM's governance requirements for continuous improvement are reflected across the organisation's policy structure.

8. Training Requirements

All Fire Marshals must complete fire safety induction, annual refresher training, and role-specific Fire Marshal training. They are also required to participate in drills and, for those working off-site (specifically at TCP venues), attend venue-specific briefings.

9. Venue-Specific Responsibilities

SAM Sites

Fire Marshals must understand:

- **FRA findings for the SAM building**
- **All assembly point locations**
- **Local escape route maps**
- **Responsibilities for staff, volunteers, and service users**
- **How to report safety concerns via SAM systems**

TCP Locations (Appendix Integration)

TCP Fire Marshals must:

- **Follow host-venue rules**
- **Ensure venue rules do not conflict with SAM policy expectations**
- **Assess suitability for individuals attending**

- **Report venue-specific risks to TCP leadership and SAM operations**

TCP follows SAM policy frameworks.

10. Incident Reporting

After a fire or drill, Fire Marshals must log several key details. These include the time of evacuation and the completion time, as well as noting any delays that occurred. Fire Marshals should also record any safeguarding concerns, injuries or near misses, and any equipment faults. In addition, it is important to document any behavioural incidents and lessons learned. These records are directly connected to SAM's safeguarding and behaviour reporting processes.

11. Fire Marshal Code of Conduct

Fire Marshals must always act calmly and decisively, modelling safe behaviour for others. They are required to remain with their group, consistently uphold safeguarding responsibilities, and maintain confidentiality. Fire Marshals should not leave their post until they have been officially stood down and must report any concerns immediately.

12. Appendices

Appendix A – TCP Fire Marshal Variations

TCP operates across multiple community venues, so Fire Marshals must also:

- **Ask host venues for fire safety briefings upon arrival**
- **Know the alarm type and evacuation route for each session**
- **Carry registers for all children/adults present**
- **Ensure all volunteers know how to evacuate safely**
- **Address any mobility or sensory needs of children/adults present**
- **Complete TCP session logs after drills/incidents**
- **Refer concerns to TCP leadership as required**