

# Policy Pack

## A Guide for Voluntary & Community Groups

*NB This pack is being revised and updated and a new version will be available in August 2003.*

*Please contact the Quality Support Team if you have any queries:*

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## Introduction to the pack

This policy pack has been put together by the Managing Well Project to assist staff who support and develop small voluntary or community groups. It contains guidance and examples of the basic policies that groups need to have in place to provide quality services and to meet funders requirements. It is envisaged that the guidance and examples can be sent out or taken out to local groups and used as a basis for developing appropriate policies. The examples provided aim to be user- friendly but may need customising to meet the particular circumstances of the group.

For each policy area there is some general guidance, example policies and procedures and material for handing out to volunteers/staff. An attempt has been made to differentiate between the requirements of small volunteer-only groups and staffed groups. To accompany the health and safety procedures there are a number of appendices containing detailed guidance & practical checklists for specific areas of health & safety. It is suggested that these are mainly given out once a local group has drawn up its policy and procedures.

The group can then request relevant appendices from the list contained in the guidance. You will need to insert your contact details on pages 54, 56, 57 & 61 of the Health & Safety section so that the group knows where to request these appendices from.



# Section 1 - Equal Opportunities Policy

## Introduction

In your local community there will be people with a wide range of backgrounds, interests and needs. Some will face unfair discrimination and may find it hard to access appropriate services, or to contribute as a volunteer or employee. Your group, however small, will need to make sure that there is nothing stopping people from all parts of the community getting involved as users, volunteers or staff across your activities and management. This will not happen automatically. You will need to take action to make your group welcoming to as many people as possible - both physically and culturally.

### **What is an equal opportunities policy?**

An equal opportunities policy is a first step in trying to make sure that your group is not discriminating on any unfair grounds eg. age, disability, race, gender. An equal opportunities policy sets out your commitment to equality and what you propose to do about it. It normally consists of :

- a policy statement
- procedures, a code of practice or guidelines

### **What is an equal opportunities Policy Statement?**

It sets out the principles the group believes in and the kind of environment the group wants to create. It will acknowledge that discrimination exists in society and that the group wishes to combat this in both the running of the group and the activities it provides. This statement sets the basis for drawing up the procedures.

### **What are the equal opportunities procedures?**

The equal opportunities procedures, guidelines or 'code of practice', are the ways you will run the group to put your policy into practice.

These should include:-

- how activities will be provided, based on the needs of the whole community
- how your recruitment procedures for volunteers, staff and committees are 'open'
- what will be done to enable better access (physical/cultural) to the group
- what information, support or training will be provided to make sure everyone understands the policy and guidelines
- consequences of not following the guidelines
- how often you will review the policy and who you will involve.

### **Action plan**

You don't get anywhere unless you take action to put your policy into practice. An action plan should show what steps you want to take, by when, and which individual(s) will carry out each step or action point out. Action points may include, for example, putting posters in different places or learning more about different disabilities or cultures so your group can better meet specific needs.



## Preparing Equal Opportunities Guidelines

In order to decide how your group will work towards equal opportunities in practice, you will need to consider:

- which groups of people in your local community might be discriminated against
- how your group can respond to a diverse range of older people's needs
- how your group can involve and harness the contribution of a wide range of people as volunteers, staff (where applicable) and management committee members

Some of the following questions may help:

- do a wide range of people see & hear about your group?  
Who won't?
- is it clear how to access your activities, become a member or volunteer?
- are the buildings that you use for your activities accessible to all. ie. can wheelchair users get in? Can you get there by bus? Is there a disabled toilet?
- are members/users involved in the decision making process?
- is it clear how to stand for membership of your group or join the management committee? Does everyone get a chance to stand?
- is there diversity among the management committee, staff, volunteers and users of your group? Does this reflect the range of people in the wider community?
- do your management committee members, volunteers and staff have the chance to discuss how to make the group more usable by the whole community?
- do your management committee and other volunteers have all the information and knowledge you need about particular needs, e.g. aids to assist those with sight / hearing loss, religious needs, particular diets & food requirements?
- do you have links with groups who focus on a particular group of older people? e.g. disabled people, Asian people, gay & lesbian people etc.

- if you use pictures on posters etc. do they reflect a wide range of people?
- how will you review your policy? Do you have a suggestions and complaints procedure to help monitor how you are doing?

After you have written some guidelines, think about what action you want to take. Identify and list a few simple things you can do. You can do much towards equal opportunities with very few resources. Some sample policies follow which you can adapt to suit your group.

## Example Policy - medium sized group

Group X recognises that certain groups and individuals in society are discriminated against.

Group X opposes discrimination against people on grounds which include age, race, gender, marital status, social class, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, disability, living with HIV/AIDS, being lesbian or gay, or having caring responsibilities.

Group X is committed to working towards equal opportunities and fair treatment in the provision of all services, the employment of all staff and involvement of all volunteers throughout the group.

### **The work of the group**

Group X aims to identify and respond to the needs of older people in the town /borough. Our goal is to enable older people to maintain and improve their quality of life, standard of living and dignity. Age is everybody's concern. We aim to provide services for older people according to need and break down negative stereotypes often associated with older people.

### **Volunteers**

Group X believes that everyone has the right to volunteer. No volunteer will be discriminated against on the grounds of age, race, gender, marital status, social class, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, disability, living with HIV/AIDS, being lesbian or gay, having caring responsibilities, employment status or unrelated criminal convictions. This principle will apply to recruitment, training and support.

### **Membership and committee structure**

Membership of Group X is open to every group which subscribes to its objects and every individual person who lives or works in X town, as detailed in the constitution/governing documents.

All applications for membership of group X will receive fair treatment. Nomination and appointments to the working groups will be in accordance with the constitution/governing documents.

All nominees and appointees will receive fair treatment.

### **Paid Staff**

Group X is working towards equal opportunities in employment. The aim of our policy is to ensure that all job applicants receive fair treatment. This principle applies to recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment. Criteria and procedures will be regularly reviewed. The aim of the policy is to ensure all employees will be given equal opportunity and, where appropriate, training to progress within the Group.

### **Premises**

Group X will make every effort to select office and other premises which are accessible to people with disabilities, and, where possible, alterations will be made and equipment provided. Venues will be found appropriate to the purpose for which they are to be used.

### **Responsibilities**

Responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy lies with the management committee of Group X. All trustees, paid staff and volunteers have a responsibility to comply with it. A breach of this policy will be dealt with by following the relevant grievance or disciplinary procedure.

This policy will be reviewed annually by ..... (*the management committee and/or staff*).

Passed by the Management Committee:

Signed: .....

Date: .....

(*With acknowledgement to Age Concern Swindon*)

## Example Policy - small group

We recognise that discrimination exists throughout society, and seek wherever possible, within the scope of our resources, to implement policies and practices to ensure that no person is discriminated against on the basis of their age, colour, race, culture, sex, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity or other unfair grounds.

In our work we will seek to reflect the different backgrounds of the whole community, by providing as much choice as possible within our resources and by seeking to attract users and volunteers with a mix of backgrounds. We will try and find opportunities that will extend our knowledge and understanding of other cultures and lifestyles, and avoid stereotyping where possible.

We recognise that this statement is not definitive, and we will review it on an annual basis, with particular reference to the way we work, how we monitor equal opportunities practice, the recruitment and treatment of volunteers and access to services by our users.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the management committee.

Passed by the management committee:

Signed: .....

Date: .....



## Example Code of Practice - groups with staff

We will not accept discrimination in our activities or in the recruitment, training, support and conduct of volunteers, staff or users, on the grounds outlined in the policy statement.

### Provision of activities

Despite limited resources, we want to:

- ensure that our services respond to the needs of a wide range of older people
- support local older people to set up their own services to meet specific needs
- signpost people to relevant services.

Current activities will be assessed once a year to identify ways of making the activity more accessible and/ or to identify areas where separate services are required. This will include looking at the mix of people using the services and of potential users, premises issues, language issues, type of food provided, aids required and other appropriate issues.

We will always strive to use premises and facilities that take into account the needs of wheelchair users, frail people, people with hearing impairments.

Every person who wants to join an activity will be given an informal assessment of need to identify any particular health, mobility, dietary, religious, physical or other support required. We will try to meet identified needs, where they are not already met. Where this is not possible, it will be recorded and reported to the management committee.

We will build relationships with disadvantaged groups of people so that they become aware of what we offer and so we can build a greater understanding of the needs of these groups of older people and the individuals within these groups.

## **Publicity**

We will try and use jargon-free language in all publicity and produce welcome signs and literature in different languages where appropriate.

Any images or pictures will reflect the range of people we want to attract.

A written outline of the activities will be provided to all relevant community groups and statutory agencies to clearly explain how to access the activities and how we prioritise people on the waiting list.

## **Involving people**

We want people from all backgrounds to be involved as volunteers, users, staff or management committee members so that we have a broad range of knowledge, skills and perspectives in the group. Special efforts will be made to achieve this. Recruitment, support and training procedures will be clear, will apply to all and will be flexible enough to take into account the needs and circumstances of particular individuals. We will always publicise that we are working towards equal opportunities in general publicity material, volunteer recruitment, job adverts etc.

## **Recruitment, support and training of volunteers**

- we will advertise volunteering opportunities in places which will attract a wide range of people
- we will match volunteers to appropriate tasks and not ask for unnecessary requirements
- volunteers will be provided with a clear description of their role
- we will be sensitive to particular requirements volunteers may have
- all volunteers will be offered induction, information training and support to enable them to be confident in fulfilling their role. Volunteers will discuss their additional support needs with their supervisor on a regular basis and we will strive to meet identified needs.



## **Recruitment of staff, support and training**

- recruitment will be on merit and potential
- all jobs will be advertised unless posts are being filled as a result of redundancy elsewhere in the group (internal applicants will be encouraged to make an application)
- all candidates for jobs will be given the written equal opportunity policy and code of practice and will be questioned on their understanding of the issues and the practical implications of having a policy
- we will only use application forms, never CVs
- all candidates will follow the same assessment process. reasons for not short-listing and final interview decisions will be recorded on the application forms and kept for 6 months
- we will take a positive approach to the development of staff.

Training and support will be offered to:

- allow re-entry to employment for new employees or former employees who have had a career break
- staff who wish to develop new skills
- people from disadvantaged groups to enable them to progress and be promoted within the organisation.

## **Responsibilities**

It is expected that all volunteers, management committee members and staff will follow the equal opportunity policy. A failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

## **Harassment**

Harassment of any kind (including on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race or sexual orientation) will be considered a disciplinary offence. Any continued behaviour which is offensive and which causes someone to feel threatened, humiliated or which undermines their confidence is likely to result in dismissal. This applies equally to volunteers, service users, committee members or staff.

This code of practice will be reviewed annually by: .....  
(the management committee and/or staff)



## Example Code of Practice - volunteer only group

We will not accept discrimination in our activities or in the recruitment, training, support and conduct of volunteers or users, on any of the grounds outlined in the policy statement.

### Provision of activities

Despite limited resources, we are committed to:-

- making our services more accessible and relevant to the needs of specific groups of older people and individuals within these groups
- to supporting local older people to set up their own services
- to meet specific needs and to signposting people to relevant services.

Current activities will be assessed once a year to identify ways of making the activity more accessible. This will include looking at the mix of people using the services and potential users, premises issues, language issues, type of food provided, aids required and other appropriate issues.

We will strive to use only premises and facilities that take into account the needs of wheelchair users, frail people, people with hearing impairments.

Every person who wants to join an activity will be given an informal assessment of need to identify any particular health, mobility, dietary, religious, physical or other support required. We will try to meet identified needs, where they are not already met. Where this is not possible, it will be recorded and reported to the management committee.

We will build relationships with community groups working with disadvantaged groups of people so that they become aware of what we offer and so we can build a greater understanding of the needs of these groups of older people and the individuals within these groups.

## **Publicity**

We will try and use jargon - free language in all publicity and produce literature in different languages where appropriate.

Any images or pictures will reflect the range of people we want to attract.

A written outline of the activities will be provided to all relevant community groups and statutory agencies to clearly explain how to access the activities and how we prioritise people on the waiting list.

## **Involving people**

We want people from all backgrounds to be involved as volunteers, users or management committee members to ensure we have a broad range of knowledge, skills and perspective. Special efforts will be made to achieve this. We will always publicise that we are working towards equal opportunities.

## **Recruitment, support and training of volunteers**

- we will advertise volunteering opportunities in places which will attract a wide range of people
- we will match volunteers to appropriate tasks and not ask for unnecessary requirements
- volunteers will be provided with a clear description of their role
- we will be sensitive to particular requirements volunteers may have
- we will take a positive approach to the development of volunteers. All volunteers will be offered induction, information training and support to enable them to be confident in fulfilling their role. Volunteers will discuss their additional support needs with their supervisor on a regular basis and we will strive to meet identified needs.

## **Responsibilities**

It is expected that all volunteers and management committee members will follow the equal opportunity policy. A failure to do so may lead to dismissal.

## **Harassment**

Harassment of *any* kind will be considered serious offence. Any continued behaviour which is offensive to a volunteer or user, which causes them to feel threatened or humiliated, or which undermines their confidence is likely to result in dismissal.

This code of practice will be reviewed annually by the management committee.



## Example Guidelines for Volunteers

We want everybody to feel welcome in our group - including you, other volunteers and our users. We want everyone to feel part of the group and to be able to make suggestions about what we do, or the way we do things.

You will have lots of contact with people who use our services - you might even be the first person a user meets on their first day. How you behave towards others will have a huge impact on how enjoyable and responsive our activities are.

Your contribution is vital in creating a group that a range of people want to come to. We hope that you will help to create an atmosphere where everyone feels valued, participates and is encouraged to make suggestions about what we do and how it can be even better.

Some groups of people are stereotyped in society and then discriminated against for unfair reasons. In our group we expect this not to happen. We expect you to welcome and consider each user as an individual with their own interests, needs and personality. We want to ensure that this diversity is welcomed. This means making the effort not to assume too much, for example, about what a person can or can't do or what a person eats or doesn't eat. In order to achieve this, we will all need challenge ourselves about the assumptions we sometimes instinctively make.

Please make sure that you do your best to follow this practice. Make sure you ask people what they want or need, and please let us know if you think another volunteer or a user is being treated unfairly - particularly if it is because of their age, race, disability, gender, marital status, social class, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation.

We try and encourage people to understand more about the way other people live, so that we can continuously improve our services to fully meet the needs of all older people. If you would like any information about different disabilities, religions, cultures, etc. please let us know and we will be happy to provide it.

Copies of our equal opportunities statement are available from  
..... (name of person / position / location).





## Section 2 - Confidentiality

### Introduction

People have the right to keep information about themselves private. Your group will need to have basic information about volunteers, users and staff to run its services smoothly. In addition to this, there will be other information that you gain as you get to know someone, and information you tell others as you get to know them. It is important to lay down certain rules about the way both this formal and informal information is dealt with. This is normally set out in a document called a confidentiality policy.

### What is confidentiality?

Everyone involved in your Group - volunteers, trustees users and staff will know some information about the personal lives of other volunteers, staff and/or users. This might be their address or, for instance, a financial or health problem. Confidentiality is about not sharing information that the person does not want passed on. It involves:-

- respecting and keeping that information to yourself
- recognising and valuing the trust that the person has put in you by telling you
- respecting the legal right of an individual to see written information about themselves.

### Why is it important to have a confidentiality policy?

- It respects and protects the dignity and privacy of users, volunteers and staff and the group
- It provides practical clear guidance will instil confidence and trust in users, volunteers, staff and external people like funders
- To comply with data protection act and possible contract requirements.

### **What is considered sensitive information?**

Some information is obviously sensitive. However, sometimes it is more difficult to tell whether the matter is sensitive or not. Indeed, it may not seem sensitive to you at all. In these situations the only way of knowing whether information is sensitive or not is to check with the person who the information is about. That person is the only person who can say whether it is confidential or who else they do not mind knowing.

## Preparing Confidentiality Policy & Procedures

You may find it useful to discuss the following with volunteers, users and staff. Then your committee or nominated people will be ready to put together your set of information rules - a confidentiality policy.

- 1 Think about what information you **need** to have about users, volunteers or staff. You should only collect **relevant** information.
- 2 What procedures do you need to have in place to:
  - know what information a user, volunteer or staff member doesn't mind sharing
  - who they do not mind sharing it with
  - ensure that only those people know
  - support people to decide whether they can share information or not.
- 3 What information is covered by your policy? Does it extend to the internal affairs of your group?
- 4 How does a user, volunteer or staff member complain if they feel confidentiality has been broken?
- 5 What is the process to assess whether a breach of confidentiality has taken place? What will happen if a breach has taken place?
- 6 What happens if someone won't give you the information you feel you require to run a quality service?
- 7 Are there any situations where confidentiality needs to be broken?
- 8 What is current practice? How will you ensure that your information rules are understood and followed?
- 9 How often are you going to review the policy? How will you do this?
- 10 How do you know you are complying with Data Protection legislation?

These questions should help you to formulate your confidentiality policy and procedures. Once you have written your policy, it will be important to put together a list of things you need to do next, to make sure the rules are known about, understood and followed. This is sometimes called an action plan.

*Some example policies follow. You can adapt them to make them appropriate to your group.*





## Example Policy - medium sized group

Group X believe in the right of privacy and the need to respect users, staff & volunteers. We want people to have trust and confidence in our group, so they feel welcome and relaxed. The policy is not to guarantee absolute privacy, or to encourage secretiveness, but to create and maintain an environment where personal dignity and individual rights are respected.

Confidentiality applies to all staff, volunteers and users and encompasses:

- all records and information about users, volunteers and staff
- any information exchanged in a formal or informal setting where it is deemed sensitive by the individual concerned
- information about the internal affairs of the group

We will ensure that:

- 1 The records of volunteers, users and staff will be kept in a safe place. These records will be accessed only by those who *need* to see them, in order to run a quality service, or by the individuals themselves.
- 2 Only necessary information will be collected. The purpose of collection will be made clear to the individual concerned and information will only be used for that purpose.
- 3 Nothing learned about service users, volunteers or staff will be implied or passed to *anyone* without the person's consent. This includes information learnt in an informal setting.
- 4 Users, volunteers and staff have the right to complain about breaches of confidentiality through the complaints /grievance procedure.
- 5 Breaches in confidence will be taken seriously and may result in dismissal of the offending person, whether a user, volunteer or staff member.
- 6 The importance of confidentiality and its implications will be part of the volunteer/staff induction process and part of welcoming a new user to the centre. Everyone will receive appropriate written information about confidentiality.

- 7 On receiving any information it is important that we recognise our own prejudices and control these when dealing with information. Our prejudices must not affect the confidentiality that must be given to information.

### Exceptions

Information may only be disclosed without the permission of the person concerned if:

- disclosure is required by law eg. police investigation of theft or suspicious death
- in circumstances of serious abuse or where there is a strong likelihood harm will come to that person (including self harm) or other matters of similar significance
- a person is felt to lack the mental capacity to make a decision. In such a case "implied consent" may be used to take action in the persons best interest. Such an incident must be recorded and reported.

In such cases, you must only disclose the information to the to (*insert name of person/position*), who will decide what action to take.

The minimum amount of disclosure possible will be expected in any such situation by anyone involved.

Passed by the management committee.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## Example Policy - small group

We believe that privacy is a right of every individual. Therefore, confidentiality will be expected when dealing with personal information which could be sensitive, whether that information be about a volunteer, user or staff member.

This means that nothing learned about service users, volunteers, staff or the internal affairs of the group will be passed on to anyone (including other users, volunteers or staff) without that person clearly expressing their permission.

Records of volunteers, staff or users will be kept in a safe place which is accessible to only those who need that information.

If a user, volunteer or staff member believes confidentiality has been breached, a complaint can be made to: .....

### Exceptions

Information may be disclosed without permission only if disclosure is required as part of a police investigation or where there is a strong likelihood harm will come to that person eg. abuse or self harm or other matters of similar significance.

In these cases the information will only be disclosed to: ....., who will decide how to proceed with the minimum amount of disclosure possible.

Passed by the management committee

Signed: .....

Date: .....





## Example Guidance for Volunteers

While you are a volunteer with Group X, you will probably hear and learn much about the personal lives of older people who use our services and perhaps other volunteers too. It is important that you respect and keep certain information confidential, both inside and outside the group, even if you are not specifically asked to do so.

### What information is confidential?

Any information that *could* be sensitive about:

- *people* - e.g. service users, volunteers, staff re. family issues, their address etc
- *money* - e.g. people who make donations, details of the welfare benefits claimed by users, staff or volunteers
- *internal affairs* - e.g. the group's finances, plans, personnel difficulties.

### How to respond to information

- 1 If you look after written information, keep it secure, and make sure you know who else is allowed access to it. Once you no longer need any paper-work, please rip it into small pieces so it can't be read by anyone else.
- 2 Keep information to yourself, unless there is a good reason to share it with others. Information that could be usefully shared is information that will help us provide better care. However, please get permission from the person who tells you the information before you share it.
- 3 Do not repeat things to people, even the person's doctor or carer, unless you definitely know that they already know, or if you have the person's permission.
- 4 It is more difficult to know what to do if someone tells you something in confidence and you think that their 'well being' may be at serious risk. If you cannot get the agreement of the person to pass on the information, talk to your supervisor, who will help you decide the best course of action.

- 5 If the information you are told relates to a crime or indicates that they are at serious risk eg. of financial, mental or physical abuse, if you can't get the person's permission to tell somebody, please tell only your supervisor, who will decide the best course of action.
- 6 If you hear anyone breaking someone else's confidentiality, please let your supervisor know.

*Please make sure you understand this guidance and follow it at all times.*

## Section 3 - Complaints

### Introduction

#### **Why have a complaints policy and procedures**

It is important that organisations listen to and involve older people. If they do this well they can provide activities and services which respond to their needs and views. Complaints should be welcomed and encouraged as part of an integrated quality assurance system which welcomes feedback, positive or negative.

The attitude “We all make mistakes sometimes: the important thing is to learn from them and not to repeat them” is a positive attitude for an organisation to adopt. A properly publicised complaints procedure, together with an invitation for positive comments and suggestions, will encourage an atmosphere in which complaints can be used as a means of resolving problems, with the complainer being encouraged to play a part in the resolution.

The main reasons for introducing a complaints procedure are:

- to enable service users to comment on weaknesses and to let the organisation know about things that have gone wrong or cause concern
- to improve the quality of services provided by taking notice of the views of people affected by the services, building on what is good and changing the less good
- to show that the organisation takes users’ views seriously and will follow up any problems that they bring forward
- to protect the interests of individual clients
- to enable users, potential users and carers to challenge decisions
- to protect staff and enable them to deal with complaints consistently
- to provide a way of monitoring the performance of the organisation
- because funders and other stakeholders (e.g. carers, local authority) will expect it.

The introduction of a complaints procedure can be an opportunity for everybody to share understanding and experience, and can be a positive step towards building the best possible service that volunteers and staff are proud to offer and members happy to enjoy. It can also be a step in building up the confidence and ability of older people to enable them to speak up for themselves in other areas of their lives.

### Who is likely to complain, and about what?

The individuals making a complaint will decide the nature and seriousness of their concerns. They may be dissatisfied with behaviour, quality, discrimination, inaccurate information, delays or policies which seem unacceptable or are not followed properly. Whatever matters to an older person or their carer, should be taken seriously by the organisation

service users	may complain about any aspect of	a policy
their carers		an activity
stakeholders		a service
their relatives		a member of staff
		a trustee
		a volunteer

## Preparing Complaints Policy and Procedures

- 1 Discuss with trustees, staff and volunteers the reason for having a complaints policy and procedure. It is important that they do not feel threatened by the introduction of a complaints policy and see the benefits of getting members' views and encouraging them to speak up.
- 2 Explain in your statement why you have a policy and what you hope to achieve by it.
- 3 Devise procedures which make responsibilities and deadlines for action clear.
- 4 Think about what help people who wish to complain may need, such as a representative, advocate or an interpreter.
- 5 Arrange a training session to make sure that all trustees, staff and volunteers know and understand the policy and are confident that they will be supported if there is a problem.
- 6 Provide additional guidance notes on how to receive complaints for internal use. (*See example*)
- 7 Monitor complaints regularly. Are there any patterns, do lots of people complain about the same things? Use the results to evaluate services and make changes.
- 8 Ensure that everyone knows about your policy. Make it user-friendly, publicise it, and get staff, volunteers and users to see it as a way of encouraging people to *resolve* problems. Use it to encourage members give their views and comments, complimentary as well as critical.
- 9 Finally, remember to review your policies from time to time to ensure that they still reflect what you are actually doing.

### Dealing with complaints - what to include

A complaints policy and procedures has two parts

- a written statement of policy and procedures which clearly tells staff/volunteers/users/funders who they should complain to, how to do this, who will follow up their complaints and how quickly they will get a response
- additional guidance notes for staff and volunteers, so that complaints can be received courteously and without defensiveness.

## Content

- 1 Keep it as simple as possible. If you have several staff and/or operate services on several sites it is important that there are clear lines of responsibility for dealing with complaints. Ensure that the system covers both informal and formal complaints.
- 2 Make it easy to complain: have a leaflet or form freely available, that clearly explains your policy.
- 3 Informal complaints (by phone or in person) can be dealt with by the person to whom they are made or by a designated person e.g. site or service manager.
- 4 Always check that the complainant is satisfied with the response they have received.
- 5 A formal written procedure should be offered for people who are not satisfied with the informal response and wish to take it further or those who do not want to make a direct approach. One person in the Organisation should be responsible for this, usually the senior member of staff or another designated person.
- 6 The formal procedure can include a second stage or appeals procedure for complainants who are not satisfied with the initial response that they receive. This is usually the Chair of the Organisation.
- 7 Set clear timescales for acknowledging, investigating and replying.
- 8 Ensure there is a system for staff and volunteers to record all complaints, large and small, in a consistent way and bring them to the attention of a responsible person e.g. the manager/chief officer/chair of trustees. A simple form or book can be used, with details of the complaint, the date it was received, the actions and decisions taken. (*See example*)

## Examples

The next section contains some examples of policy statements, procedures and guidelines for medium sized and small organisations which you can adapt for your own use.

These examples are based on actual policies used by Age Concern groups and Organisations. However, it is important that you develop practical systems that will work well in your own organisation. The allocation of responsibility for dealing with complaints and the time scale you can promise for responses will depend on the resources, structure and management responsibilities of your group.





## Example Policy - group with paid staff

*Insert names, times, and appropriate job titles for your organisation where marked in italics*

### Policy statement

Our policy is to welcome complaints and suggestions from users of our services so that we can identify where things have gone wrong and improve them. *(Name)* recognises that users of our services and facilities have the right to expect high quality services. If our services do not meet these standards, then users have the right to complain. Any complaint will be considered using our internal procedures which are set out below.

Complaints can be made about anything that gives someone cause for concern. The individual decides the seriousness of the complaint which could be about:

- behaviour of staff or volunteers
- the standard of service we provide
- discrimination
- provision of inaccurate information
- delays or failures
- policies which you find unacceptable.

### The purpose of our policy

- to protect the interests of individual service users
- to improve the quality of service we provide by responding to the views of people affected
- to enable service users, potential users and their carers to challenge our way of working
- to protect our staff and volunteers
- to provide a means of monitoring our performance.

### **Promoting our policy**

- all literature about the organisation will include a simple summary of this complaints procedure
- the comments, suggestions and complaints leaflets should be available in all our establishments
- all staff, volunteers and trustees should be familiar with the process and it should be included within all induction training.

### **Procedures**

#### **Informal complaints**

- 1 A person wishing to complain should first tell *the member of staff or volunteer on duty*.
- 2 If they are not satisfied with the response they should ask to see the person in charge.
- 3 If the complaint cannot be dealt with immediately, a written response will be made within five working days.

#### **Formal complaints**

- 4 If the person wishing to complain is still not satisfied or does not want to make a personal approach they should write to the (Chief Officer) at (address) (or fill in a Complaints and Suggestions form).
- 5 The (Chief Officer) will investigate the complaint and make a written response within ten working days.
- 6 If the person complaining is still not satisfied they can write to the Chair requesting a meeting at a mutually convenient time and place.
- 7 An Appeal Committee made up of three members of the Executive Committee will consider the complaint.
- 8 A written response will be received within ten working days of the panel meeting.
- 9 All complaints will be recorded in the appropriate way and reported to the (Chair, Co-ordinator) Details should include the nature of the complaint, the date received, the process followed and the action taken.

Complainants will be given any help they need including:

- help in writing a formal complaint
- the opportunity to be accompanied by a friend, advisor or advocate
- an interpreter or signer.



## Example Policy - small volunteer run organisation

***To all the people who use our services, and our volunteers - help us to help you.***

- We are a voluntary service, run by volunteers. We want to provide a good service and it helps us to do that if you will make suggestions for improvements or, if necessary, complain about the way you feel that you have been treated, or the service you have received.
- Your comments will be treated seriously by us. We will try and address them, and do what we can to improve things within the resources we have got.
- If you have a suggestion or would like to make comments about the service, please tell one of us and ask us to note it for our next Committee meeting
- Alternatively you can write to us at :

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

If it is a complaint we will look into it, and contact you to try and resolve the issue within one calendar month.

The voluntary management committee meets every.....

We thank you for suggestions and comments and will let you know what we have done, in order to improve our service as a result of your comments.

*with acknowledgement to Tony Farley*



## Example Guidance for Staff and Volunteers

***These guidelines are about listening to people.***

Many people aged 60 or over depend on (*name of Group*) to provide them with effective services. Services need to be provided in a way that is effective and relevant to all users and potential users, taking into account their disability, ethnic origin and gender and maintaining their dignity and self-respect at all times.

Our aim is to provide the best service that we can for the people we care for. One important way to do this is to listen to the views of older people and those of their carers. Some older people find it difficult to make us understand their worries, problems and needs, and often don't like to complain. However, if we are to provide a consistently high quality service, we must make sure our customers know that they have a right to speak up about any concern they have about our services. If we listen to these concerns we can either resolve the problem or make appropriate changes.

We are not interested in blaming anyone, only in resolving problems. To help us do this we have devised a complaints policy and designed a leaflet to give to the people using our services. This explains to them how to get help if they have a problem, comment or complainant. You need to know the process as well, because you may be the person with whom the customer feels most comfortable and therefore may be the one s/he speaks to first.



### Why do people complain?

Frustration

Loss of control or dignity

Rude or Indifferent staff

Items have “gone missing”

Loss of self-respect

We don’t listen

Needs aren’t met

Inefficient services

### Why don’t people complain?

It’ll make things worse

I’ll be labelled a trouble-maker

Be thankful for anything

Lack of confidence

They’ll stop my services

They won’t believe me

Already complained once

### Myths about complaints

#### WRONG

The fewer complaints the more we are getting it right

Only trouble makers and moaners complain

Some people want everything and are never satisfied

A few complaints won’t hurt

#### RIGHT

Only the minority of dissatisfied users complain

The *name* group’s reputation is at risk

It can be costly and stressful to complain. The majority of complainants usually have a good reason

A positive approach to complaints may gain their understanding and change a critic to a supporter.

## Implementing the Complaints Procedure: Dos & Don'ts

### ***A procedure is only as good as the person implementing it***

ALL comments/complaints are important to the person voicing them. No matter what the level of complaint is, it is of great concern to the individual. Try to view our services as the user does.

ALL comments/complaints, if taken seriously, could lead to improved or new services. The result is happier users and staff.

### **Do**

- maintain confidentiality at all times
- be friendly, give your name and ask their's
- allow the complainer to say what they want without interrupting
- keep calm, even if the complaint seems unreasonable or irritating
- listen carefully, to find out what the issue really is
- concentrate and get details; This alone may help people feel better
- accept how people feel but remember that this may not be enough
- be positive and explore possible solutions
- thank the person, without them we might not have known something was wrong
- be honest, say why a service can't be offered
- record the problem or complaint or report it to the person in charge even it seems small and easily dealt with
- check if the complainant is satisfied or wishes to take the matter further.

**Don't**

- be defensive, you'll make the person more unhappy
- take it personally, the person only wants change
- look for someone to blame, the organisation is responsible - we are the organisation
- make promises, a broken promise leads to anger
- don't be vague about your response - if you are not sure what to say, or need to speak to someone else before resolving the problem, say so.

## Section 4 - Health & Safety

### Introduction

An organisation has a legal duty to ensure (as far as is reasonably practicable) the health and safety of every person who is affected by its activities - directly or indirectly. This includes volunteers, users, staff, visitors and members of the public. These broad responsibilities are contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and supplemented by various regulations & guidance notes e.g for use of VDU's, food safety etc. You are advised to get copies of those which are relevant to your organisation.

In strict legal terms a group who pays a wage to one or more people is bound by the legislation. However, the HSE expects groups with only volunteers to provide the same level of protection as it would do for employees. This means that health and safety is a serious concern for every group, however small.

By law, employers who have 5 or more employees must (and it is strongly advised that volunteer only groups take this to mean 5 or more volunteers):

- have a written health and safety policy
- communicate this policy to anyone working under the organisations control.
- review it regularly and make the policy available for inspection.

A Health and Safety policy document is usually in three parts:

#### **1 The general statement of policy**

This should state your commitment to health and safety, and in particular:-

- safe premises and environment
- safe internal and external access and exits to premises
- safe equipment and systems including handling, storage and transport
- training, support and information as is necessary for all volunteers, users and staff.

## **2 Responsibility for carrying out the Statement of Intent**

This part should identify who is responsible for implementing particular aspects of the policy.

## **3 The arrangements and procedures**

This part should set out the practical things that you will do to meet the law and reduce hazards identified in your risk assessment. It should include your arrangements for registration of activities, insurance, risk assessments, fire, first aid, reporting accidents, food safety & hygiene, displaying notices, information and training, VDU's, admissions policies & hazardous substances.

## Example Policy Statement - groups with staff

As a caring and responsible employer, we the trustees of Group X accept our responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and supplementary legislation. We consider that the health, safety & welfare of all persons affected by the conduct of our undertakings is of great importance.

We undertake, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety & welfare at work of all our employees and volunteers, to protect people working under its control (including outside contractors), service users, customers, & visitors (including members of the public). We will have particular regard to the health & safety requirements of older people and others who may have special needs.

We will achieve our aim of meeting health & safety requirements through the implementation and maintenance of a health & safety system. This will involve identifying responsibilities (*see part (a)*), monitoring legal requirements, carrying out sufficient and suitable written risk assessments and setting appropriate standards. Relevant procedures, checklists and training will be provided for trustees, staff & volunteers as a result of the risk assessments (*see part (b)*).

In particular we also will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- the provision & maintenance of safe places of work
- safe internal & external access & exits to premises under our control
- a healthy & safe working environment with adequate first aid provision and welfare facilities
- safe equipment and systems of work
- safe arrangements for use, handling, storage & transport of articles & substances at work
- adequate fire prevention measures and fire and other emergency procedures which are made clear to staff and volunteers
- a system of notification of accidents, including methods of recording and investigation.

Our system seeks to ensure that trustees, staff, volunteers & users are aware of their personal responsibilities and accountabilities for health & safety at work.

The health & safety training needs of everyone will be identified. The delivery of a training program will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that everyone is aware of their responsibilities for health & safety at work and competent to undertake their activities in a safe and healthy manner.

This Health and Safety system will be kept up to date, particularly as the group changes in nature and size. It will be reviewed annually.

Signed: ..... (Chair-on behalf of the trustees)

Date: .....

## Example Policy Statement - volunteer only groups

We, the management committee of Group X, recognise that we have a duty of care to all our volunteers, members and anybody visiting or otherwise affected by our activities. We recognise our obligations under the relevant health and safety legislation and, so far as is reasonably practicable, take responsibility for the extent to which our policy is met.

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain:

- safe premises and environment
- safe internal and external access and exits to premises
- safe equipment and systems including handling, storage and transport
- adequate fire prevention measures and fire and other emergency procedures which are made clear to volunteers
- such training, support and information as is necessary for all volunteers and users.

A full risk assessment of all activities and premises will be conducted annually and action taken to minimise any identified risks.

We will identify in written documents attached to this policy statement:

- a) responsibilities of the management committee, activity leaders, and individuals
- b) such arrangements and procedures as are considered necessary to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable a healthy and safe environment.

The importance of co-operation and good communication between all individuals involved in Group x is a key part of creating and maintaining a safe environment. Every individual has a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, and must follow procedures and co-operate with other volunteers and users. Breaches of this policy by volunteers or users will be taken seriously.

The policy will be reviewed annually and when any significant change to the organisation takes place.

Signed: ..... Date: .....





## Example Part (a): Responsibility for Health and Safety - groups with staff

*This example is based on a system whereby a health and safety sub committee works with a paid member of staff to implement the health and safety policy.*

### Trustees

Trustees have overall and final accountability for ensuring a healthy & safe working environment, despite delegation of implementation to the Health and Safety Sub-Committee and the Chief Officer. Legal requirements will be met by ensuring that there are clear processes in place to assess and minimise hazards in the workplace. The workplace is defined as any place where staff & volunteers undertake their tasks. Trustees will ensure that the Health and Safety Sub-Committee keeps up to date with legal changes and receive regular updates and reports from the Health and Safety Sub-Committee.

### Health & Safety Sub-Committee\*

The Health & Safety Sub-Committee will oversee the implementation of health & safety in Group X.

The role of this Sub - Committee is to:-

- to be responsible for ensuring, with the Chief Officer that all legal requirements under the Health & Safety Act are met in the assessing of, and minimising risks
- to ensure the Management Committee is fully aware of the Health & Safety policy & procedures
- to inform other trustees of significant problems and to take corrective action where necessary
- to work with the Chief Officer to ensure the risk assessments and other
- procedures & checklists are in place and suitable and sufficient to meet the policy requirements

- to report accidents to relevant authorities as per RIDDOR<sup>1</sup> 1995\*
- to check that records of all training, accidents & risk assessments are filed for 3 years\*
- to review insurance and the Health & Safety policy on an annual basis
- to undertake other tasks as required to meet the policy requirements.

### **Chief Officer/Manager**

The Chief Officer (CO) holds responsibility for the effective implementation of the Health & Safety policy. The CO, with support from the H&S sub-committee will ensure all legal requirements under the Health & Safety Act are met.

### **Tasks**

- undertake full risk assessments annually and when significant changes take place with relevant trustees, staff & volunteers using HSE forms\* (including fire risks, hazardous substances and food safety where relevant)
- consult with other staff / volunteers to assist with health & safety procedures to minimise the risk from hazards identified through the risk assessment process
- ensure that staff & volunteers have knowledge of relevant current legislation
- devise a training plan and keep records of staff / volunteer training\*
- communicate & display Health & Safety notices and rules, hazards & other information to staff, volunteers & users as relevant\*
- file and keep copies of all records of training, accidents & risk assessments for 3 years

---

<sup>1</sup> The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

- ensure that suitable protective clothing is available where appropriate
- check First Aid boxes are replenished
- ensure appropriate staff / volunteers provide records of daily checks of activities and premises where appropriate\*
- undertake un-announced inspections from time to time of each activity
- practice fire drill and evacuation at least once per year
- record undertaking of these tasks and report to H&S Sub-Committee.

### **Nominated Staff / Volunteer Activity Leaders**

The Chief Officer will identify other staff or volunteer activity leaders who have day to day responsibility for health & safety within the activity they manage. These staff members are:-

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Staff / Volunteer with health and safety responsibility</b>
<i>eg. Day Care</i>	<i>Day Care Organiser</i>

Day to Day responsibility means:

- undertaking a formal risk assessment process with the Chief Officer every year or when significant changes take place
- working with the Chief Officer to improve safety and reduce risks
- ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable that safe systems of work are always used & that procedures are always followed by staff & volunteer
- carrying out regular checks to ensure procedures are being followed
- recording accidents in the Accident Book and reporting them and any concerns to the Chief Officer
- input into identifying training needs of staff and volunteers.

## **All Staff & Volunteers**

Every individual has a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work, and must so far as is reasonably practicable follow procedures and co-operate with nominated staff, volunteers & trustees. If staff or volunteers fail to follow procedures it will be dealt with as serious matter which could invoke the disciplinary procedure.

***\* Example forms, checklists or further guidance on these issues are available from: .....  
or Age Concern England - for the full list of appendices see page 67 of this Health & Safety Policy pack.***

## Example Part (a): Responsibility for Health and Safety - groups with volunteers only

*This is based on a system whereby 2 management committee members become 'Lead officers' for health and safety. They work with nominated volunteers (ie. volunteers who run activities) to implement the health and safety policy.*

### Management Committee or Trustees

The management committee/trustees have overall responsibility for, and are accountable for, the health & safety of the environment. They will ensure that all legal requirements are met, primarily through conducting risk assessments of the premises and activities and introducing relevant guidelines to minimise hazards. Two management committee members will be nominated as 'Lead Officers' on health and safety. They are: ..... (*insert names*)

The role of these 'Lead Officers' is to:-

- undertake full annual risk assessments with relevant volunteers using HSE forms (including assessment of Substances Hazardous to Health) \*
- write down ways of minimising the risk from hazards identified through the risk assessment process ie. draw up procedures
- keep up to date with legislation and respond appropriately
- identify training needs and keep records of volunteer training \*
- communicate & clearly display health and safety information
- keep records of accidents & risk assessments for 3 yrs and report accidents to relevant authorities
- ensure that gloves, tabards and other suitable protective clothing is available
- check & replenish First Aid boxes
- ensure nominated volunteers provide records of appropriate checks eg. fire drills; food temperature checks (where relevant)
- undertake occasional unannounced inspections of each activity to ensure that procedures are being carried out correctly
- keep minutes & records of their own actions, discussions and tasks\* and report to the management committee on matters of health & safety policy.

## Nominated Volunteers

Volunteers who have responsibility for organising and/or running activities have a responsibility to ensure they are run in accordance with the health and safety policy.

Nominated volunteers with responsibility for health & safety:-

Activity	Day to day responsibility for health & safety
<i>eg. Lunch Club</i>	<i>Lunch Club Organiser</i>

Day to Day responsibility means:-

- undertaking a full risk assessment with a Lead Officer every year or when changes occur eg. new equipment
- working with the lead officer to introduce safety guidelines to reduce risks
- ensuring that safe systems of work are always used & that procedures are always followed by all volunteers
- carrying out appropriate checks to reduce hazards\*
- recording accidents & incidents and reporting them and any other concerns to the Lead Officers.

## All Volunteers and users

Every individual has a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work, and must follow procedures and co-operate with other volunteers and users. Volunteers are fully informed of this responsibility by: .....(action/person)..... If volunteers fail to follow procedures it will be dealt with as a serious matter and may result in the volunteer(s) being asked to leave. If users behave in a manner which is dangerous to themselves or others, they may be asked to leave the premises.

**\* Example forms, checklists or further guidance on these issues are available from: ..... or Age Concern England - for the full list of appendices see page 67 of this Health & Safety Policy pack.**





## Guidelines for Preparing Part (b): Arrangements and Procedures for Health and Safety - for groups of all sizes

In this section of you should list the arrangements that are in place to reduce risks. The following are suggested headings, **however it should be noted that many may not be relevant to your organisation**. Under each relevant heading you should: -

- state your policy on the matter
- state what procedures are in place to ensure safety and state who, when and how they will be carried out.

*To support this section, examples of checklists, forms and further guidance can be provided by..... or AC England as indicated below. (see page 67 for a full list of appendices)*

### 1 Registration of activity with Environmental Health Department

All groups should check whether they need to register their activities with the local Environmental health Department. This section should include the name of the activity which needs to be registered and date of registration.

### 2 Risk assessments of premises and activities (HSE form Appendix C)

A full risk assessment of all premises and activities should be carried out each year and when any significant change takes place.

It is a good idea to use the standard HSE risk assessment form as a basis.

You should state a commitment to minimising identified risks. You may find it helpful to list the range of factors you will need to address in you risk assessment. This may be food safety, fire safety, safe manual handling, personal safety, electrical safety, work with VDUs, stress management, user assessment policy, smoking policy etc.

### **3 Health and Safety checks** *(Example checks for food safety - Appendices H,I, J, K,L)*

These are the routine checks that need to be carried out whenever people are in the premises. eg. checking exits are clear, tables are clean or food is hot enough. Checklists can be a useful way to ensure and record the undertaking of these checks. This section should refer to the checklists which are in use.

### **4 Health and safety inspections**

State your intention re. normal inspections and also any unannounced inspections.

### **5 Food safety** *(Example guidelines - Appendix G; For checks H, I, J, K, L)*

If you provide food, you will need written guidelines for personal hygiene, sanitary provision, wash basins, food storage, preparation and food waste. You may also want to produce checklists to define & record checks.

### **6 Insurance**

A commitment to obtaining appropriate insurance is important. State who is responsible for this. Policies need to be reviewed annually.

### **7 Fire precautions** *(Example checklist Appendix N)*

Check if a fire certificate is required and if so obtain a copy. Fire alarm procedures should be clearly displayed with the place of assembly in case of a fire or test. Fire evacuation drills should be carried out annually.

Regular fire safety checks should be carried out to ensure exits are clear and fire extinguishers maintained. You may find it useful to produce a monthly checklist to ensure consistency and record the checks.

Note the details of your local fire brigade, list your fire safety equipment, service dates and the name of company hired to check this equipment.

## **8 First Aid**

First aid boxes should always be provided. You should have first-aiders where you have a lot of visitors or more than 50 staff or volunteers. Names and locations of first aiders must be clearly displayed. Remember it is important to provide protective gloves.

## **9 Recording and reporting accidents** (*Example forms - Appendix R & S*)

If you employ anybody you will need a standard book to record any accidents. It is also a good idea even if you don't employ anybody. Serious accidents and incidents as defined by RIDDOR (1995) have to be reported to a statutory authority.

## **10 Hazardous substances** (*Example form - Appendix E*)

These should be identified in the risk assessment and a notice about them placed near to where they are stored. You might like to keep a record of any such substances on a basic form.

## **11 Electrical equipment**

Electrical appliances should be visually checked before using and it should be clear who problems should be reported. You should commit to an annual inspection by a qualified electrician and ensure circuit wiring is inspected every 5 years. You may find it helpful to keep a list of electrical equipment and when it was last tested.

## **12 Machinery**

You should draw up procedures for the use of specific machinery and the commitment to safety guards. No-one should use machinery without training.

## **13 Manual handling**

Procedures should be drawn up to cover any necessary lifting and carrying. Factors to consider are the weight & nature of the load, the task, working environment and individual capability. Any training, equipment and display notices needed should be identified and provided.

#### **14 Display Screen Equipment** *(Example guide Appendix O; checklist - Appendix F)*

Appropriate aids (eg screen filters, wrist rests, etc.) and training (including necessity to take regular breaks) should be provided. For regular DSE users eye-tests must be provided and under certain circumstances glasses.

#### **15 Personal Safety**

As part of the risk assessment procedure you must consider what safety measures you will put in place to protect staff, volunteers and users.

#### **16 Stress management**

You may consider providing support and training for stress displayed by staff. It will however be equally important to address the causes of such stress.

#### **17 Admissions & assessment policy**

If some of your service users have particular disabilities or frailties you should make sure so far as is reasonably practicable that their needs (physical & mental) have been properly assessed to ensure that so far as is reasonably practicable you can provide them a healthy and safe environment.

#### **18 Smoking**

You should have a clear policy on smoking for staff, volunteers and users.

## Example Part (b):

### Arrangements and Procedures for Health and Safety - for groups of all sizes

*To support this section of the policy, please see the list of appendices (example forms, checklists and further guidance) on page 67, all of which are available from..... or Age Concern England.*

#### **(a) Registration of activity**

X Service/activity was registered with the Environmental Health Officer on: ..... (Date): .....

#### **(b) Health & Safety Risk Assessments** (using HSE forms - appendix C)

Group X recognises its legal duty to carry out a full annual risk assessment and when any significant change takes place of all individual activities, premises and practices (including fire risk assessment, food safety hazardous substances). As a result of the risk assessment, Group X will take appropriate action, so far as is reasonably practicable, to minimise risks posed by identified hazards to anyone affected by Group X's activities. The involvement of volunteers and staff in the risk assessment will be encouraged.

Completed risk assessments will be written down, acted upon so far as is reasonably practicable and made available to all trustees, staff & volunteers involved with Group X.

The people responsible for undertaking the risk assessment are:  
.....

#### **(c) Health & safety checks & inspections**

Appropriate health & safety checks will be carried out on a day to day basis in the following areas:-

Lunch Club - cleaning checks, temperature of fridge, freezer and food.

These health & safety checks will be carried out routinely by nominated staff/volunteers and recorded in the appropriate Day Book.

Records of daily checks should be kept and given to:

.....

If any problems arise ..... will resolve them in consultation with those involved.

The ..... must carry out unannounced inspections of health & safety practice each activity at least 4 times a year.

#### **(d) Food safety**

Group X recognises its duty of care to provide safe food. Group X will ensure that it meets requirements under the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 and other relevant legislation with regard to storage, preparation & training. In particular it will ensure that all staff & volunteers in regular contact with food have received training. We have written guidelines (See *Appendix G*) which cover:-

- personal hygiene
- sanitary provisions and wash basins
- cleaning routines of work area & equipment
- food storage, including temperature checks of food, including that in fridges & freezers
- food preparation, paying particular attention to high risk foods & cross - contamination
- arrangements for food waste

#### **(e) Insurance**

Group X conforms to the legal duty to have & prominently display the certificate of employers liability insurance which meets statutory minimum cover (£5 million) (whilst it employs one or more people). Other insurance needs will be considered as appropriate. The (*name of person / position*) is responsible for renewing or taking out appropriate insurance policies and recording details below. Full details of insurance policies are kept ..... (*X location*).....

Insurance policy - title/brief details of cover	Renewal date
Public liability Insurance	June 2001

### (f) Fire precautions

Group X will provide sufficient fire fighting equipment and clearly marked and unblocked exits from premises. The landlord has responsibility for obtaining a fire certificate as there are more than 20 people working on the ground floor (or more than 10 people working at height).

It is issued by: .....

Renewal Date is: .....

Group X recognises it's responsibility to displaying & adhere to the conditions of the certificate. The person responsible for implementing these conditions and ensuring that all staff, volunteers and users are aware of them is the ... *(name of person/position)*...

Local Fire Brigade contact name: .....

Company hired to check, maintain & service fire safety equipment:

.....

### List of fire safety equipment

Item	Location	Service Date

All staff & volunteers will be trained in fire procedures and a fire drill & evacuation will be practised once a year. Procedures will be displayed and the address of the premises & assembly point will be displayed by the phone. On hearing fire alarm leave by the quickest possible route & go to the assembly place.

On finding fire:-

- 1 operate fire alarm without putting yourself in danger
- 2 call 999 if you can do so without putting yourself at risk
- 3 tackle fire if you can do so without putting yourself at risk
- 4 go to place of assembly and call 999 if not done so.

### **(g) First Aid**

Group X will provide appropriate first aid support in compliance with the First Aid At Work Regulations. A fully stocked first aid box will be provided at each ..... (e.g. day centre) and at the main offices. Each (day centre) and the main offices will have a trained first-aider. Protective gloves will be available in the first aid kit. The persons responsible for organising & replenishing First Aid are: ..... (name of person(s)/position(s)).

### **(h) Recording & reporting of accidents & incidents**

Group X has a legal duty to record all accidents that happen at work, and report Major Injuries & Dangerous occurrences to the local Environmental Health Officer. An accident book is provided to record all accidents (Appendices R & S). The ... (name of person/position)... must be contacted immediately following an accident or incident. The ... (name of person/position)... is responsible for reporting entries to the management committee. All accidents will be investigated by: ... (name of person/position)... and results reported to the Management Committee. Records of injuries will be kept for 3 years.

### **(i) Hazardous substances**

Group X will meet regulations under the Control of Substances hazardous to health regulations 1995. All hazardous substances will be identified through risk assessments. An inventory will be produced which will include items such as office glue, bleaches etc. Staff & volunteers will be notified of the presence of such hazards via notices and written procedures. (Appendix D)



## j) Electrical equipment

All staff & volunteers using electrical equipment will check the appliance visually before use. If any faults are found before, during or after use, these faults will be reported immediately to:

..... (name of person/position)

who should arrange repair or replacement and inform:

..... (name of person/position).

Annual inspection of equipment by a qualified electrician will be arranged by: ..... (name of person/position). Every 5 years the fixed wiring will be inspected and certified free from danger. If this is the landlords responsibility, Group X will request a copy of the issued certificate.

### Register of electrical equipment

Item	Last tested

## (k) Machinery

No staff/volunteer will use machinery unless they have received training. All machinery will have the required guards. Where appropriate a code of practice will be written.

### Register of machinery

Item	Trained users

## (l) Manual handling

Group X will comply with legislation on manual handling of loads. All tasks will be assessed against factors such as the weight & nature of the load, the task, working environment & individual capability. Steps will be taken to reduce risks in lifting and moving goods / equipment or people, including training, equipment and the display of notices.

### **(m) Visual Display Equipment**

Group X undertakes to assess workstations and reduce any risks found. All equipment will comply with the HSE VDU checklist so far as is reasonably practicable (*Appendix F*). Designated users will be entitled to the provision of regular eye-sight tests and any necessary glasses where the need has been caused by use of DSE at work. Information & training will be given to people on the use of their equipment. (*See users guide - Appendix O*)

### **Review**

These Health & Safety arrangements will be reviewed at least annually by: ..... (name of person(s)/position(s))

Date of next review: .....

## List of Appendices

*To support section (b) of the policy, examples of the following can be provided by: .....  
or Age Concern England:-*

- Checklist for Chief officer (Appendix A)
- Role of Health & Safety Committee (Appendix B)
- HSE standard risk assessment form (Appendix C)
- HACCAP (Food safety assessment form) (Appendix D)
- COSHH (hazardous substance risk form) (Appendix E)
- Visual Display Unit workstation checklist (Appendix F)
- Food Hygiene Code of practice (Appendix G)
- Checklist for risk control - food (Appendix H)
- Checklist for day to day food preparation & storage (Appendix I)
- Fridge / freezer temperature checks-Day Book record forms (Appendix J)
- Cleaning Day Book records (Appendix K)
- Food Temperature Checks - Day Book record forms (Appendix L)
- Safe Use of Knives - guidelines (Appendix M)
- Fire inspection checklist (Appendix N)
- VDU regulations - users guide (Appendix O)
- Training plan for staff & volunteers (Appendix P)
- List of Notices to be displayed (Appendix Q)
- Guide to Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrence (Appendix R)
- Accident Form (Appendix S)



## Appendix A

### The Role of the Health & Safety Sub-Committee

The role of the Health and Safety Sub-Committee is to:-

- check that the health & safety policy is being fully implemented
- check that the relevant procedures are adequate
- check that records are being kept
- ensure the Health & Safety policy is up to date and satisfactory
- inform and make recommendations to the Trustees on matters of health and Safety.

The Health & Safety Sub-Committee will fulfil this role by meeting with the Chief Officer on a quarterly basis to:-

- ensure that a full annual risk assessment has been undertaken, including risks of harmful substances (COSHH) and food safety (HACCAP)
- to work with the Chief Officer to ensure the risk assessments and other procedures & checklists are in place and sufficient to meet the policy requirements
- to ensure that other legal requirements are met - as per policy
- to report accidents/near misses to relevant authorities as per RIDDOR<sup>2</sup>1995
- to check that records of all training, accidents, near misses & risk assessments are filed for 3 years
- to review and renew insurance policies
- to review the policy on an annual basis and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees
- to report significant problems to the Board of Trustees and to take corrective action where necessary
- to update trustees on general matters of health & safety.

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<sup>2</sup> The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)



## Appendix B

### Example checklist of activities for Chief Officer

Annual activities	Date when completed	Initial
<p><b>Tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertake full annual risk assessments with relevant trustees, staff &amp; volunteers using HSE forms (including assessment of Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, Food Safety (HACCAP) &amp; Fire Safety)</li> <li>• consult with staff/volunteers to produce health &amp; safety procedures to minimise the risk from hazards identified through the risk assessment process</li> <li>• implement other aspects of the Health &amp; Safety Policy</li> <li>• ensure that staff &amp; volunteers have up - to date knowledge of current legislation</li> <li>• devise a training plan and keep records of staff / volunteer training</li> <li>• ensure that suitable protective clothing is available</li> <li>• practice at least one fire drill &amp; evacuation</li> <li>• register relevant activities with Local Authority</li> <li>• check whether fire certificate is required and if so renew it/check the landlord has renewed it</li> <li>• organise testing of electrical equipment</li> <li>• work with Health &amp; Safety Sub - Committee to ensure trustees are fully aware and informed of the implementation of the Health &amp; Safety policy.</li> </ul>		

Quarterly Activities (date & initial when completed)	Quarter 1	Q 2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check all H&amp;S notices, rules, labels and signs are clearly displayed</li> <li>• check protective clothing is available for relevant people</li> <li>• undertake unannounced inspection of all activities to check procedures are being followed and no new hazards have been introduced</li> <li>• check First Aid Boxes have been replenished.</li> </ul>				
<b>Weekly activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure appropriate staff / volunteers provide records of daily checks of activities and premises record in health &amp; Safety Day Book.</li> </ul>				
<b>‘As it happens’</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• induct new staff / volunteers or check with nominated person that they have been inducted in H&amp;S policy &amp; procedures. Record any training provided</li> <li>• undertake full risk assessments with relevant trustees, staff &amp; volunteers of new equipment, new activities or changes to current work practices before they start and one month after operation, using standard HSE forms</li> <li>• repair or replace hazardous equipment</li> <li>• report accidents / near misses to relevant authority</li> <li>• inform management committee of concerns or incidents</li> <li>• file and keep copies of all records of training, accidents , near misses &amp; risk assessments for 3 years.</li> </ul> <b>Chief Officer records all Health &amp; Safety actions in Health and Safety Record Book.</b>				



## Five Steps to Risk Assessment

Available from the HSE Web page:

[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hazards.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hazards.htm)

- Select 'Leaflets about Hazards at work'
- Select 'R'
- Select '5 Steps to Risk Assessment'

























## Appendix D

### Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCAP)

These regulations require employers to identify all steps in food activities and processes which are critical to food safety to ensure adequate controls are implemented, maintained and reviewed.

HACCAP is the formal system used to meet this requirement. Control mechanisms should be appropriate to the potential hazards of your activities.

The aim of HACCAP is to :-

- identify potential sources of contamination from microbiological, chemical or physical hazards eg. bacteria, cleaning agents, pests etc
- prevent food from becoming contaminated by people and the environment
- stop the bacteria on the food from multiplying (by temp. control)
- destroy bacteria in food (by heat treatment).

To identify hazards critical to food safety draw a flow diagram of your activity from purchase through to service of food, identify hazards at each stage and put adequate control measures in place. eg. regular temp. checks in fridges, freezers, heated & reheated foods; food deliveries, illness and training records.

(see example checks - appendices I, J,K,L)

[illegible]

## Appendix E

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1994	
Organisation	
Hazardous Substance	
Supplier	
Manufacturer	
Description of Task / use of substance	
Number of Persons involved	
Type of potential harm (Y/N)	eyes - (Y/N) inhalation - (Y/N) skin - (Y/N) ingestion - (Y/N)
Risk Classification (eg. Corrosive, Irritant)	
Other hazards (does it react with any other substances?)	
Control measures	
Personal Protective Equipment	
Training	
First Aid	- Eye contact: - Skin contact: - Inhalation: - Ingestion:





## VDU Workstation checklist for Risk Assessment

Not available electronically.







## Appendix G

### Basic Food Hygiene Code of Practice

The Food Safety Act 1990 and Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 - apply to everyone who handles food.

Good practice will protect food against being contaminated or infected by germs.

Food should be prepared as safely as possible to lower the risk of illness and food poisoning, particularly among the high risk groups (ie. older people, very young and people who are already ill). This code of practice applies to **all** persons handling or preparing food and must be followed at all times.

#### 1 Personal Hygiene

Food poisoning germs are normally carried by healthy people in the nose, throat and bowel. Scrupulous personal hygiene is therefore essential in order to ensure that such germs are not passed on to the food. It is thus necessary to lay down form rules which must be observed at all times.

**Outdoor clothing** must be hung up **outside** kitchen / food preparation area.

**Smoking** is not allowed in the kitchen or building. It should be noted that smoking in a food preparation area is illegal and a prosecutable and dismissable offence.

**Finger nails** must be kept short and not bitten.

Always wear a **clean**, light coloured apron, or overall (to protect to food) when in the kitchen. Tie back hair and cover with a hat.

Avoid wearing jewelry or strong perfume when cooking.

Use **blue** waterproof dressings to cover any cuts/grazes, boils, whitelows, skin rash or abrasions (store in first aid box) or a finger stall or glove. **Renew** old plasters as necessary.

If you or a member of your household is suffering from a heavy cold, stomach upset or similar illness, please report it to your supervisor who will swap your cooking duty.

If you are suffering from any septic condition please report to your supervisor.

### **Wash hands regularly**

Use hand wash only sink & anti - bacterial soap from a dispenser:-

- before starting work
- before and after cleaning / disinfecting work surfaces
- between handling raw & cooked food
- after blowing nose, touching face (ie. nose, mouth, ears)
- after visiting toilet
- after smoking
- anytime you return to the food area
- after handling refuse
- after touching / handling other people
- whenever they are dirty

**This helps to keep the number of bacteria down and prevent cross - contamination. Use paper towels to dry hands on.**

## **2 Wash basins**

Always use separate sinks for hand washing, dish / equipment washing and food preparation. If the 3 basins are not clearly labeled, please tell your supervisor.

## **3 Keeping the kitchen area & equipment safe and clean**

All kitchen work-surfaces, chopping boards (and dining tables) need to be wiped/ washed and disinfected.(ie. sanitised with eg. dettox) prior to use and regularly during preparation and cooking of food. **Use separate** chopping boards for raw and cooked items - these should be clearly marked or colour coded.

### **Record cleaning on cleaning schedule checklist (example in appendix G)**

Use fresh J cloths and fresh tea towels each day. You can leave crockery etc. to dry naturally. Only dry hands on paper towels.

Do not use **wooden** equipment - wood absorbs liquid and is difficult to get clean.

#### 4 Food storage

Store raw and cooked foods **separately** (eg. raw foods in the bottom of the fridge).

**Check temperatures in fridge & freezer** prior to food preparation and again before leaving the centre.

**Record in day book and initial appropriate box.** Clean & defrost fridge regularly and **record in day book.**

**Fridge temperature** should read **between 0 - 5C** (when most bacteria are unable to multiply). **freezer temperature** should read - **18C and below.** Beware the **danger zones of 5 - 63 C** when bacteria can multiply rapidly.

If temperature readings are incorrect contact.....

#### 5 Food preparation & cooking

**High risk food** - be especially careful with poultry, raw meat, eggs, fresh cream, cooked meats and meat products. In particular, wash hands utensils and surfaces regularly.

**Raw and cooked food must be kept separate** during food preparation. Use **separate** utensils/equipment (eg. chopping boards, knives) to prevent cross - contamination.

Always thaw frozen food properly before cooking unless the instructions tell you to cook it from frozen. Once thawed completely, cook immediately - do not re- freeze. Make sure larger items (eg. joint of meat) are cooked all the way through. Cut in half if necessary and where possible check the temperature.

If you need to taste food, **use a clean spoon every time.**

Record hot food temperatures before serving in day book. Do not keep food at room temperature - **keep it either hot or cold.** **Hot food** must be above **63C.** **Cold food** should be stored **below 5C** in fridge.

Keep food covered and handle as little as possible.

Food prepared or cooked at home must be transported to the day centre in an insulated container. Hot food prepared at home must be cooked according to these rules and cooled quickly (never leave out for more than one & a half hours before refrigerating.)

**Avoid re-heating** food if at all possible, but if food has to be re-heated you must heat it through to a high temperature. Make sure it is hot- above 63C.

Avoid pouring hot sauces over cold food eg. keep hot gravy separate from cold meat on plate and serve immediately

Wash up in **hot** water with detergent. Rinse and leave to dry or use a **clean** tea towel.

## 6 Food waste

Food waste should be placed in a lined and covered kitchen bin. At the end of the day securely fasten the bag and put it in the refuse bin outside. Wash hands after handling refuse. Do not leave left-overs in the fridge or cupboard.

Please report any signs of pest infestation to: .....

Please read all other information and notices on Food Safety provided for you. Please do not hesitate to ask:

..... if you have further questions.



## Appendix H

### Checklist for risk control - Food

- 1 Where required the food business is registered with the local authority. ☐
- 2 Risks to food safety have been assessed and a HACCP form has been completed for hazards critical to food safety. ☐
- 3 Food suppliers are vetted to ensure food supplied is safe complies with relevant food safety legislation. ☐
- 4 Food handlers are trained in food hygiene at a level appropriate for their tasks, and receive refresher training as required. ☐
- 5 All food handlers are aware of the high standards of personal hygiene to be maintained to prevent risk of food contamination ☐
- 6 The workplace, equipment and utensils are kept clean and free from harmful bacteria, by using suitable detergents and/or sanitises. ☐
- 7 Raw and cooked meat are always stored / displayed separately and separate utensils are used in their preparation. ☐
- 8 Suitable thermometers are fitted in fridges / freezers and temperatures are monitored. ☐
- 9 Probe thermometers are used to monitor the temperature of meats, poultry and supplied foods. ☐
- 10 Cold high risk foods are kept chilled at 4°C or below and frozen at -18°C or below (or as recommended on packaging, if stricter) ☐
- 11 Cold high risk foods for display may be kept above +4°C for a maximum period of 4 hours only, before being chilled below +5°C or thrown away. ☐
- 12 Hot high risk foods are heated to +75°C and kept at a temperature of above +63°C before serving. ☐
- 13 Hot high risk foods kept for service or display may be held at temperatures of +64°C or below for a maximum period of 2 hours before being discarded. ☐

- 14 Reheating of high risk foods is avoided. If foods are to be re-heated a temperature of +75°C must be recorded and foods should not be reheated more than once. ☐
- 15 Foods must be thoroughly defrosted before heating. ☐
- 16 All persons working in a food handling environment are aware of their responsibility to report certain illnesses through to their manager. ☐
- 17 Managers are aware of their responsibility to report certain illnesses through to the local Environmental Health Department. ☐
- 18 Appropriate records are kept eg. HACCP, temp. controls in fridges, freezers and heated foods, reheated foods, food deliveries, training, illness. ☐

## Appendix I

### Checklist for those with day to day responsibility for food preparation & storage.

#### At beginning and end of each day check that: -

- All work surfaces & tables are cleaned with disinfectant and this action is recorded in Day Book (*Day Book record sheets - Appendices J,K,L,I*)
- All H&S notices / signs are displayed
- Hand and food washing basins are clearly & separately labeled
- Temperature in the fridge is between 0-5°C (record in Day Book)
- Temperature in the freezer is below -18°C (record in Day Book).

#### Check regularly throughout the day that: -

- Tables are cleaned hourly and recorded in Day Book
- Clothing / equipment / baggage are not causing an obstruction to passageways or doorways
- Volunteers are following all aspects of the H&S policy guidelines including checking that food temperatures are being recorded on correct forms.

#### At the end of each week: -

- Send Day Book records to nominated trustee

#### General Points

- Do you know whether everyone handling food has received basic food hygiene certificate and is aware of the H&S procedures?
- Have you recorded any accident or near miss in the accident book and reported it to the nominated trustee?  
(located: .....)

If you need further information or wish to discuss anything concerning health & Safety, please contact: .....

**ACTIVITY:** Fridge Temperature Checks (between 0-5C)  
Freezer Temperature checks (below -18C)

Initial if temperatures are as above when checked. If temperatures are not as above contact: .....Tel: .....

Date	Time	Fridge	Freezer	Comments
d/m/y	9.00 5.00			
	9.00 5.00			
	9.00 5.00			
	9.00 5.00			
	9.00 5.00			

## Example Day Book Records

**ACTIVITY:** Table / Work surface cleaning with approved products. Initial when cleaned.

Date	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	Comments
D/M/Y										

### Food Temperature checks

- High risk foods should be heated to above 75°C and then kept above 64°C before serving
- Other hot food should be heated to above 64°C before serving
- Reheated foods should be reheated to above 75°C
- High risk foods should not be served at below 64°C
- Cold foods should be 4°C or below until serving

Foods should be tested with a probe thermometer. Record temperatures below at appropriate stages of preparation and service.

Date	Time	Food tested	Stage of preparation (heating, re-heating, before serving)	Temp. recorded	Initial

## Appendix M

### Safe use of knives

**Hazard** - the speed and type of work may lead to cuts on the non - knife hand and fingers. Care should therefore be exercised when using knives.

#### **Precautions:-**

- Select the correct knife for the task
- Ensure that the knife handle is clean and can be properly held
- Use a firm grip and an even pressure for cutting
- Always cut downwards and away from the body
- Never try to catch a falling knife
- Position yourself, when using a knife, to avoid being bumped by another person
- Ensure that cutting blocks, tables and boards are firm, smooth and clean
- Do not leave knives lying about on worktops and tables
- Do not store unprotected knives in drawers
- Do not leave knives in washing up water
- Ensure that all knives are stored in racks or sheaths
- Always carry a knife point downwards





## Fire safety monthly checklist

General Safety	y/n
Is combustible refuse removed from the premises on a regular basis?	
Is the system adequate - eg. does the rubbish need to be collected more often?	
Are any flammable substances and quantities of combustible materials stored safely?	
Are people smoking in appropriate places and disposing of cigarettes safely?	
Is the smoking area checked on a daily basis?	
Are portable heaters adequately guarded and away from combustible materials?	
Have any faulty electric goods been isolated and labelled for repair?	
Are combustible sources stored away from heat sources eg. radiators / lights?	
Means of Fighting Fire	
Are all fire extinguishers present and located to suitable, labelled fire points ie. on fixed brackets approx. 1.2m from the floor, situated on escape routes, with fire extinguisher signs above?	
Are fire extinguishers readily available - not obscured by refuse, equipment or personal belongings?	
Are fire extinguishers strategically located in the area where they will be most use ie. type of fire extinguisher matched with type of risk?	
Are fire extinguishers tested every year and labelled with test details?	
Are fire extinguishers free from damage or corrosion?	
Where a pressure gauge is fitted on the extinguisher - is there any loss of pressure?	
Means of Escape	
Are escape routes easily and directly accessible?	
Are exits and passageways regularly checked to ensure they are clear of stored articles or other obstruction?	
Are fire doors kept shut. ie never propped open?	
Are all escape routes and final exit doors clearly signed ie. fire route directional signs and fire exit signs above the doors?	
Do all final fire door releases work correctly, making the door easy to open?	
Are all fire doors immediately accessible during working hours & never locked by key?	

<b>Means of Fire Direction and Given Warning</b>	
Are all users of the premises familiar with the type and sound of the fire alarm?	
Are all users aware of the day and time of fire alarm tests?	
Has a regular test of the fire alarm been undertaken and results recorded?	
If a fire alarm system is not installed in the building and a manual warning must be given - are all personnel able to hear it?	
Are smoke detectors fitted in appropriate places throughout the building?	
Are smoke detectors checked on a regular basis, as recommended by the manufacturer?	
Are smoke detectors free from dirt, dust and other objects which could interfere with their correct operation?	
<b>Evacuation of Premises</b>	
Have all regular users of the building taken part in a fire drill exercise within the last 12 months?	
Did all staff evacuate the building promptly and safely and report to the designated assembly point?	
Were there any persons who required special assistance in the evacuation? If so, did they receive the required assistance?	
Are people aware that lifts must not be used in the event of a fire, with the exception of lifts specifically for disabled people?	
Are visitors to the building made aware of fire instructions, escape plan etc?	
<b>Fire Safety Information</b>	
Are the fire notices (an escape plan and fire action sign) prominently displayed within the premises and on every level of the building?	
Are the fire instructions up to date?	
Have all volunteers and staff at induction and at routine intervals, been shown a primary and alternative escape route and their assembly point?	
Are all volunteers, staff and users aware of their duty to report any fire hazards?	
Are the daily and weekly fire checklists being completed?	

## Appendix O

### Regulations for Visual Display Unit Users - users guide

These regulations apply to all persons using a VDU.

The employee is required to analyse the work situation themselves to identify any specific risks and adjust brightness and contrast controls to suit. Any identified risks must be reported to:

..... (person responsible for H&S).

Employees who use VDU's for a significant part of their normal work can request a regular eyesight test by an optometrist or doctor & can request additional tests if problems are linked to VDU usage.

Users should be aware of what the employer has done to comply with the regulations, such as the action to reduce the risks and arrangements for breaks. Problems should be brought to the attention of: .....

#### Instructions to users

- 1 Adjust your chair - arms should be horizontal and eyes at the same height as the top of the VDU casing.
- 2 There should be space under the desk to allow free movement of legs.
- 3 A footrest can help avoid excess pressure on the backs of legs and knees.
- 4 Avoid repeat stretching movements, and change posture regularly.
- 5 Adjust the keyboard and screen for a comfortable position. A space in front of the keyboard can help rest hands and wrists. When keying, do not bend up at your wrists; keep a soft touch on the keys - do not over-stretch your fingers.
- 6 Ensure that there is sufficient work space for whatever documents you need. A document holder can help avoid awkward neck movements. Try different layouts of keyboard, screen and document holder to find the best arrangement.
- 7 Bright lights should not be reflected on the screen. You should not be directly facing windows or bright lights.

- 8 Characters on the screen should be sharply focussed, without flickering.
- 9 The screen should be clean, free from dirt or grime or finger marks.
- 10 The brightness control on the screen should be used to suit the lighting conditions in the room.

Appendix P

## H&S Training Plan & Records

Year:

Training Area / Course name	Staff & volunteers to attend	Date of training	Attended (y / n)



## Appendix Q

### Notices to be displayed

These notice should be displayed prominently & in sufficient quantities that all staff and volunteers see them.

- Employer Liability Certificate of Insurance (if relevant)
- Health & Safety Law poster
- Instructions on what to do in case of fire
- Any other notices designed to reduce risk as a result of the Health & Safety risk assessment process





## Appendix R

### Recording and Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

The following must be recorded and reported to the Environmental Health Department of your Local Authority:

- fatal accidents\*
- major injury accidents\*
- dangerous occurrences\*
- accidents which cause more than 3 calendar days incapacity for work (*see note (a) below*)
- accidents connected with work and involving a member of the public who is then taken to hospital (*see note (b) below*)\*
- acts of violence against an employee resulting in injury\*
- absence from work due to repetitive strain injury (reportable disease).

**NB:** (a): **Incapacity for work** does not necessarily mean absence from work. It is the inability to carry out their normal work duties.

(b): this clause is to be taken literally, i.e. in such cases if the person is taken to hospital, regardless of the injury, it must be reported; BUT if they take themselves no report is required (unless any of the other conditions apply).

**Major injury accidents** cover:

- fractures (except to fingers, thumbs and toes)
- amputations
- dislocations of shoulders, hips, knees or spine
- loss of sight (temporary or permanent)
- electric shock which result in unconsciousness, admittance to hospital for 24 hours or more or require resuscitation
- any acute illness from inhalation or adsorption of any substance.

**Dangerous occurrences** are listed under R.I.D.D.O.R. but only things such as a burst boiler or failure of a load bearing part of a lift are possible for most small groups.

**NB** the lists given are not comprehensive but they do cover all that are considered possible to happen to small voluntary groups.

Should any of these occurrences happen then they must be reported to the enforcing authority which is the Environmental Health Department of your Local Authority as follows:

- For occurrences above marked with a \* the enforcement authority must be telephoned **as soon as possible** (i.e. in most cases immediately).
- For all occurrences a report must be submitted to the enforcing authority within 10 calendar days using form F2508 for accidents and dangerous occurrences or form F2508A for a reportable disease.

Volunteer only organisations are not bound by these regulations, but it is good practice to follow them and most will need to inform their insurance companies of events covered by RIDDOR.

## Appendix S

### Accident Form

#### General Details of Accident

Date: ..... Exact location: .....

Is this organisation in overall control of the premises / event? Y / N

If no, give the name of the owner/leaseholder: .....

#### Type of incident:

Fatality	<input type="checkbox"/>	specified major injury	<input type="checkbox"/>
over 3 day injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	dangerous occurrence	<input type="checkbox"/>
under 3 day injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	damage incident	<input type="checkbox"/>
physical assault	<input type="checkbox"/>		

#### Injured person

Full Name: .....

Age: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

#### Status of injured person

employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	self-employed person	<input type="checkbox"/>
volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>	contractor	<input type="checkbox"/>
user of services provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	member of general public	<input type="checkbox"/>
employee of another organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Role in organisation? .....

How long with the organisation? .....

What was injured person doing at the time of incident? .....

.....

.....

Was this something they were authorised to do? .....

Were they authorised to be in the location of the incident? .....

When was the incident reported? .....

Was the incident witnessed by other people? .....

Was first aid treatment given on site? Y /N Details: .....

.....

Was medical / hospital treatment obtained? Y/N Details: .....

.....

Anticipated absence from organisation:

none ☐

less than 3 days ☐

3 days or more ☐

Action taken to prevent reoccurrence: .....

.....

Date action taken: .....

Signed: ..... Name: .....

Date: .....