

GAYDON PARISH COUNCIL
HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

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, 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.

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 would be provided for employees. This means that health and safety is a serious concern for every organisation, however small.

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

- have a written Health and Safety policy
- communicate this policy to anyone working under the organisation's control
- review it regularly and make the policy available for inspection.

1. General Statement of Policy

Gaydon Parish Council recognises that it has a duty of care to all its staff, volunteers, and members of the public who are affected by its activities. The Council recognises its obligations under the relevant health and safety legislation and, so far as is reasonably practicable, takes responsibility for the extent to which the policy is met.

The Council's policy is to provide and maintain:

- safe premises and environment
- safe access and exits to premises
- safe equipment and systems
- such training, support and information as is necessary

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

The Council will identify in written documents attached to this policy statement:

- a) the responsibilities of Councillors and Clerk
- 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 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 others.

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

2. Responsibility for carrying out the Statement of Intent

2.1 Council responsibility

Gaydon Parish Council has overall responsibility and accountability for the health and safety of people on the playing field, the cemetery, and other open areas belonging to the Parish Council. The Council, including the Clerk, will ensure that all legal requirements are met, primarily through conducting risk assessments of the areas and activities and introducing relevant action to minimise hazards.

To this end, it will:

- undertake, or arrange for qualified others to undertake, full annual risk assessments, and keep such risk assessments for not less than 3 years
- record ways of minimising the risk from hazards identified through the risk assessment process
- keep up to date with legislation and respond appropriately
- identify training needs and keep records of any training
- communicate and clearly display health and safety information
- keep records of accidents for not less than 3 years, and report accidents to relevant authorities
- ensure that any defects detected are recorded, and appropriate action taken to rectify these
- keep minutes and records of all actions, discussions and tasks on matters of health & safety.
- ensure any employee handling chemicals (eg used for weeding or cleaning) has carried out a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations assessment

2.2 Recording and reporting accidents

The Parish Council will record any accidents or near accidents. Serious accidents and incidents as defined by RIDDOR (1995) will be reported to a statutory authority. (See Appendix C)

2.3 Display Screen Equipment

All employees will be made aware of the requirement to use appropriate aids (eg screen filters, wrist rests, etc.) and training (including the necessity to take regular breaks) will be provided as required. (See Appendix A)

2.4 Insurance

The Parish Council is committed to obtaining appropriate insurance. Policies will be reviewed annually. The responsibility for this is vested in the Parish Clerk and the Chair of the Council who will make recommendations to the whole Council. Changes made will be subject to the agreement of the Parish Council.

3 Arrangements and procedures

3.1 Insurance and qualifications

Organisations and contractors used by the Council will be asked to provide evidence of appropriate and adequate training for the activity to be undertaken, that they have carried out their own risk assessments, and that they carry appropriate and adequate insurance cover.

3.2 Accidents and near accidents

Records will be kept of accidents and incidents which take place on areas for which the Parish Council is responsible. (See Appendix D)

3.3 Notices

All notices displayed will be regularly checked for legibility, and for any changes which may be required to the notice due to changes in legislation or for any other reason. (See Appendix B)

3.4 Disability

If members of the public using the facilities have particular disabilities or frailties, the Council will make sure that their needs (both physical & mental) have been met, so that, as far as is reasonably practicable, they are provided with a healthy and safe environment.

Appendix A: Regulations for Visual Display Unit Users

These regulations apply to all persons using a Visual Display Unit (VDU).

All employees are required to analyse their own work situation to identify any specific risks and to adjust brightness and contrast controls to suit. Any identified risks must be reported to the Chair of the Parish Council. Users should also be aware of what the employer has done to comply with the regulations, such as the action to reduce risks and arrangements for breaks. Problems should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Parish Council

Employees who use VDUs for significant periods of time for their normal work for the Parish Council can request a regular eyesight test by an optometrist or doctor and can request additional tests if problems are linked to VDU usage.

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, wrists and arms. 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 B: Notices to be displayed

These notices should be displayed prominently and in sufficient quantities that they are seen by relevant people.

- Certificate of Employers' Liability Insurance (if relevant)
- Health & Safety Law poster (if relevant)
- A notice informing members of the public how to report accidents
- Any other notices designed to reduce risk as a result of the Health & Safety risk assessment process

Appendix C: 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 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 results in unconsciousness, admittance to hospital for 24 hours or more, or requires resuscitation
- any acute illness from inhalation or adsorption of any substance.

NB The lists given are not comprehensive but they do cover all that are considered possible to happen to a small organisation.

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.

Not all organisations are 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 D: Accident Form *

General Details of Accident

Date: Exact location:

Was the Parish Council in overall control of the event? Y / N

If no, give the name of the organiser:

Type of incident:

- Fatality Specified major injury
- Over 3 day injury Dangerous occurrence
- Under 3 day injury Damage incident
- Physical assault

Injured person

Full Name:

Age:

Address:
.....
.....

Status of injured person

- Employee Self-employed person
- Volunteer Contractor
- User of services provided Member of general public
- Employee of another organisation

Role in organisation?

How long with the organisation?

Details of incident and action taken

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

Names and contact details of any witnesses

.....

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 re-occurrence:

.....

Date action taken:

Signed: Name:

Date:

* To conform with Data Protection requirements, the forms should be loose leaf and a new form used for each accident. This will prevent people from reading personal information from previous accident.

Appendix E: Example checklist of activities of Councillors and/or Clerk

Annual activities	Date when completed	Initial
<p>Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake full annual risk assessments with relevant people • consult to produce health & safety procedures to minimise the risk from hazards identified through the risk assessment process • implement other aspects of the Health & Safety Policy • review insurance policies • ensure that Councillors/staff have up-to-date knowledge of current legislation • identify training needs and keep records of Councillor/staff training. 		

Quarterly Activities (date & initial when completed)	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check all Health and Safety notices, rules, labels and signs are clearly displayed • undertake periodic inspection of all activities to check procedures are being followed and no new hazards have been introduced 				

<p>'As it happens'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • induct new Councillors/staff or volunteers in Health and Safety policy & procedures. Record any training provided • undertake full risk assessments with relevant Councillors, staff or volunteers of new equipment, new activities, or changes to current work practices before they start and one month after operation • repair or replace hazardous equipment • report accidents/near misses to relevant authority • inform other Councillors and/or Clerk of concerns or incidents • file and keep copies of all records of training, accidents , near misses and risk assessments for 3 years.

Version Control

Version 1: 2021 original document

Version 2: 2024 reviewed