

Health and Safety Policy

1. Policy

This policy outlines New Mills & District Volunteer Centre's commitment to managing health and safety effectively, so as to provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions for:

- all our employees and volunteers and to provide such information, equipment, training, and supervision as they need for this purpose.
- any groups and individuals using the services we offer and to provide the information they need to comply with our policy.
- groups, agencies, and individuals using our premises for meetings or training.
- members of the public, whether calling into our premises or otherwise affected by our activities.

The arrangements which we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to watch out for potential or actual hazards and to inform the Centre Manager. Failure to observe this guidance will be viewed as a breach of the organisation's policies and can lead to disciplinary action.

The designated officer, the Centre Manager, will ensure that:

- Appropriate training and instruction is given to all staff and volunteers.
- The Health & Safety Poster issued by the H & S Executive is displayed.
- Office Fire Rules are displayed on the office premises.
- Records are kept of all accidents and injuries relating to all staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the building.
- Staff and volunteers are made aware of any potential hazards and provided with the relevant information on health and safety matters.
- The staff team is informed of any health and safety matters that may affect the organisation.
- The organisation's responsibilities under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 are carried out.
- Health and Safety issues are a regular agenda item on the staff meetings.
- The Health and Safety Policy is regularly reviewed.

a. General

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the organisation is that of the **Chair of the Board**.

Day to day responsibility for health and safety in the organisation lies with the **Centre Manager**

- All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to co-operate with supervisors and Centre Manager to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

- Whenever an employee, volunteer, supervisor or manager notices a health and safety problem that they are not able to put right, they must immediately inform the appropriate person.
- Consultation between management and employees is provided by regular staff meetings where issues can be raised on the agenda.

b. First Aid

There is one first aid box located in the building.

The person responsible for the boxes is the Centre Manager.

The First aid box can be found in the downstairs Kitchen.

An up to date list of qualified first aiders can be found on the downstairs notice board.

c. Accident/Hazard Reporting

It is essential that all accidents that happen at work, no matter how small, are properly reported. This must be done, even if no apparent injury was received. In addition to reporting an actual accident it is equally important that employees report a 'near miss' or potential hazard, so that the organisation can deal with it and help prevent employees or volunteers from suffering an injury.

d. Risk Assessments

The overall responsibility for Risk Assessments is held by the Centre Manager.

There are a number of separate risk assessments which are updated and maintained annually.

These are held within the Risk Assessments folder on the shared drive.

The risk assessments are created, updated and shared with the relevant members of staff for each area, and the ownership of the risk is shared with them and the Centre Manager.

e. General Fire Safety

The Centre Manager is the person responsible for fire safety within the building.

Checks of the following are carried out regularly by the Centre Manager or their nominated representative:

- Escape routes (daily).
 - Fire Extinguishers are serviced (annually).
 - Fire Alarms test (weekly).
 - Fire Blanket (annually).
 - Fire Alarm (6 monthly) carried out by external contractor.
- The Centre Manager will ensure sufficient staff are trained in the evacuation procedures to act a fire wardens and assist others in the event of the alarm sounding.
 - Fire drills must be carried out every 6 months and are organised by the Centre Manager. These are carried out and then recorded within the building's Fire Folder. This drill will monitor the speed of evacuation and pick up whether there is further training or instruction needed.

- All visitors must sign the visitors' book on arrival and sign out on departure. Every member of staff must take responsibility for this with visitors, ensuring that any volunteers on the reception desk are aware of this procedure.
- All staff must sign in and out of the building on the same visitors book.
- Fire exits must be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times. Notices concerning fire exits or covering procedures in case of fire must be clearly on display and not be removed.
- Employees and volunteers must make themselves familiar with the nearest fire exit, the recommended means of escape, the designated assembly point and with the location and operation of the fire-fighting equipment.
- Fire wardens will receive periodic instruction on how to use the extinguishers, although personal safety is paramount and the use of the fire extinguishers is only acceptable under certain circumstances, i.e., a very well contained fire, or a very small fire.

f. Training

Responsibility for training rests with those named above for specific areas of responsibility.

g. Action List for Contractors and Visitors

- Explain fire exits and drill in case of fire.
- Explain about no smoking status of building.
- Instruct them not to obstruct passageways or protected stairwell.
- Explain location of fire extinguishers and fire doors.
- Explain procedure for unlocking/locking main doors on entry and exit.
- Instruct them not to use any electrical or hot works equipment within the premises without permission.

h. Equipment

The Person responsible for ensuring all of the equipment in the building is safe and kept in good working order is the Centre Manager.

Checks as follows:

Equipment	Nominated Company	Regularity
All plugs, cables, appliances	TBC	Every 2 years
Extinguishers		Every 12 months
Alarm System		Every 6 months

i. Manual Handling

New Mills and District Volunteer Centre has a responsibility to;

Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks involved in manual handling. The assessment must look at four areas:

- The task – reduce the risk of injury by improving the task layout, using the body more efficiently.
- The load – making it lighter, smaller, easier to grasp.
- The working environment – remove space constraints, ensure adequate lighting etc.
- The individual's capability – personal considerations, appropriate training etc

- Where reasonably practicable, make alternative arrangements to avoid the need for manual handling if there is a risk of injury. Where manual handling cannot be avoided provide manual, automated or mechanical aids and training.
- Record all accidents and ill health.

It is a rule that only trained staff members should undertake manual handling. Volunteers and clients should not be allowed to lift or move objects.

As a rule staff and volunteers should not lift or handle any client in any way.

j. The working environment

New Mills and District Volunteer Centre has a responsibility to check the following;

- Are there space constraints preventing good posture?
- Are there uneven, slippery or unstable floors?
- Are there variations in the levels of floor or work surfaces?
- Are there extremes of temperature or humidity?
- Are there ventilation problems?

Users of Display Screen Equipment Workstations

New Mills and District Volunteer Centre has a responsibility to identify which of their employees/volunteers are DSE users and to ensure that the 1992 regulations covering usage of DSEs are adhered to.

k. Feedback and Improvement

New Mills and District Volunteer Centre continually seeks to improve all aspects of our work, and Health and Safety is no exception. It is vital to ensure that a feedback loop and a record of learning is created from any incident or mistake.

We achieve this by:

- Updating risk assessments annually, using 'near miss' logs, accident reports, sickness records and other health and safety related documents to update the record of hazards and the risk associated.
- Researching current legislation via HSE.gov.uk and ensuring we are always fully compliant.
- Recording anything that should come up from staff meetings, board meetings and/or reports from the team and ensuring these are taken seriously.

3. Responsibilities – Staff and Volunteers

a. General

The Health and Safety Act 1974 has laid down certain duties for all volunteers and employees. The duties are to take care of their own safety and that of other volunteers and workers and to cooperate with the organisation and its officers to enable it to carry out its responsibilities. Please ensure you read those guidelines relevant to your activity within New

Mills and District Volunteer Centre and please raise any questions you have with your line manager or supervisor. In particular, employees have a duty to:

- Work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, their clients, the general public or any other person who has a right of access to New Mills and District Volunteer Centre premises at any time.
- Adhere to the safety procedures as laid down by the organisation and to conform to all instructions given by those with a responsibility for health and safety.
- Report all accidents, near miss occurrences and hazardous situations to appropriate persons.
- Wear safety and/or protective clothing, use protective equipment and use appropriate safety devices, where these are provided for use at work.
- Meet their other statutory safety obligations including that laid down in Section 8 of the Act, which states `no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any relevant statutory provisions`.

The following general points will contribute significantly to overall health and safety;

- Floors, steps, stairs, passages and fire exits should be kept clear of obstruction at all times.
- Wires to telephones, electrical equipment etc., should not be placed so that someone could fall or put their chair on it.
- Office layout should be such that employees and others can use it safely- e.g., filing cabinets should not open into passages or across doorways.

The Centre Manager holds overall responsibility for completing regular building checks.

b. Personal safety

New Mills and District Volunteer Centre is concerned for the personal safety of all its volunteers and employees.

In order to reduce the element of risk, New Mills and District Volunteer Centre is committed to the development of policies and procedures for identifying and eliminating risk and training all employees dealing directly with the public, in assessing risk and in preventing violent incidents.

If employees or volunteers are concerned in any way about their personal safety, they must discuss the matter with the Centre Manager or a member of the team immediately. On no account should employees or volunteers put themselves at risk.

c. Other Procedures to Consider

Depending on the role, there are always additional Health and Safety procedures to consider for each staff member and volunteer. These are held within the Health and Safety Procedure, which includes:

- First Aid
- Accident Reporting
- Fire & Evacuation
- Manual Handling
- Dealing with the Public

- Handling Money
- Office Safety and Security
- Escorting People
- Handling Refreshments
- Driving

Ensure that this document is read fully and understood by all relevant parties. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure they are aware of the procedures, and the responsibility of the key worker or line manager to ensure compliance.



Health & Safety Policy Statement

It is New Mills & District Volunteer Centre's policy to:

- Provide adequate control of health and safety risks including fire.
- Implement emergency procedures in case of fire or other significant incidents.
- Provide and maintain safe equipment & environmental conditions.
- Provide information, instruction and supervision to staff and volunteers.
- Engage and consult on health and safety issues.
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- Ensure safe handling and use of substances.
- Annually review its health and safety policy

Employees must co-operate with New Mills & District Volunteer Centre in delivering its legal responsibilities by:

- Work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, their clients, the general public or any other person who has a right of access to New Mills and District Volunteer Centre premises at any time.
- Adhere to the safety procedures as laid down by the organisation and to conform to all instructions given by those with a responsibility for health and safety.
- Report all accidents, near miss occurrences and hazardous situations to appropriate persons.
- Wear safety and/or protective clothing, use protective equipment and use appropriate safety devices, where these are provided for use at work.
- Shall not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any relevant statutory provisions.

Tony Ashton
Chair
June 2023