Health and Safety Policy 2026

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of the Health and Safety Policy at Hesketh Bank Community Centre (HBCC) is to pledge to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions and environment for all our employees, volunteers and centre users.

This includes any other people who are directly affected by our activities, such as members of the public attending functions and events. We seek to ensure that the Centre is accessible, inclusive and safe for all.

The Trust will provide the required information and training to employees and maintain a programme to foster a positive and inclusive health, safety and welfare culture.

The arrangements for health, safety and welfare matters are set out below.

General arrangements

A risk assessment will be carried out prior to each event. This will include assessing risks relating to all aspects of the event including equipment; venue; employees; volunteers; attendees; entertainers. Appropriate actions will be taken to minimise hazards at events and Centre activities.

HBCC may also run regular events at the same venue or using the same equipment, such as monthly meetings. In this case we will carry out a general risk assessment for the event/activity/equipment/venue/attendees.

All general risk assessments will be reviewed at least once a year.

We will make sure that all employees and volunteers at events and activities are aware of the location of emergency arrangements including fire exits, first aid equipment and any related hazards.

All employees and volunteers will be made aware of the precautions they need to take as noted on the relevant risk assessment(s).

No employee or volunteer will run a capacity event or function on their own, and at least one other member of the team will remain at an event/function until the last attendees have left.

All safety concerns including Safeguarding matters, accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported to the responsible person.

This policy and the way in which it operates will be reviewed annually by the Trust.

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety at all HBCC's events and activities organised by the centre lies with The Chairperson.
The policy will be implemented within day to day activities held at the Centre, by the employee or volunteer. This person will be responsible for ensuring that the Centre's policy is upheld.

For all other events the responsible person will be named in advance and their name will be noted on all relevant risk assessments. All employees and volunteers involved will be made aware of who is responsible for health and safety.

Safety Officer(s)
The Trust delegates overall responsibility for health and safety within the Centre to the Centre Manager as the Safety Officer. In their absence, the Trustee with responsibility for Health and Safety is responsible.

The Safety Officer(s) should ensure that the Trust receives regular reports on health and safety issues and may call a special meeting where a health and safety matter requires urgent attention.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for liaising with employees, volunteers and centre users relating to health and safety matters.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for ensuring that the Centre has adequate cover under the Employers' Liability Act 1969 and Public Liability insurance.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for arranging the following: safety training; safety inspections including fire; monitoring of the maintenance of equipment; first aid training; and investigation of accidents.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for carrying out Risk Assessments of work practices, use of equipment and other hazards in accordance with HSE Risk Assessment guidelines.

Employees and Volunteers
All employees and volunteers have the responsibility to comply with measures to achieve a healthy and safe workplace, and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

All employees and volunteers are responsible for health and safety within their area of work. They will put right a hazard or unsafe work practice as soon as reasonably practicable. If a hazard cannot be put right, it should be reported to the Safety Officer(s) and the equipment or area within the Centre should be closed down until it is safe to use.

Additional procedures (pandemic)
When restrictions are in place due to a National pandemic, the Trust will follow the current relevant government guidelines.

General arrangements
Accidents and incidents
The Appointed Person responsible for taking charge in an emergency during public opening hours is the employee/volunteer on duty.

There is always an Appointed Person (First Aider) on duty.

The person responsible for maintaining the First Aid box is the Safety Officer(s).

The Safety Officer is responsible for reporting accidents and diseases notifiable under RIDDOR.
All employees and volunteers have a duty to be familiar with the First Aid processes, appointed person(s) and procedures including the location of the defib and the second nearest, should multiple machines be required.

All employees are aware of the procedure for the treatment of injuries involving the loss of blood in order to avoid the risk of spreading infectious diseases such as HIV/Aids and Hepatitis.

The First Aid boxes and the defib are located as signed within the Centre. Supplies are in the Office. The First Aid manual is within the First Aid box.

The Accident Record form is in the First Aid box, copies available within the First Aid master file (in the office).

A record of accidents/incidents/near misses/serious incidents should be indicated as such on the form and procedures for reporting and/or further action detailed in that form should be followed.

General Fire Safety
The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for Fire Safety arrangements; these include ensuring that there are adequate signed escape routes from the building and that Fire Action notices are kept up to date.

All employees and volunteers have a duty to be aware of the Fire Action instructions and the location of Fire Alarms.

The employee/volunteer on duty is responsible for ensuring that, during a fire, all users and visitors follow the Fire Action instructions and leave the building safely.

The employee/volunteer on duty is responsible for checking that escape routes and exits are clear and fire extinguishers in place each day while opening up the Centre.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for monthly checks of the smoke alarm, emergency lighting, fire exit signs and Fire Action notices.

Fire extinguishers are serviced annually in January of each year by an external approved contractor.

The fire alarms within the Centre are part of a system for the whole building, these are tested weekly in line with our Fire Risk Assessment and schedule.

The Fire Alarm break points in the Centre will be tested by the Safety Officer(s) on a frequent basis.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for liaising with the Trust regarding Fire Action, and ensuring the Safety Procedure which covers the Centre's activities is kept up to date.

There will be a full evacuation and fire drill once a quarter. A form will be completed after each drill noting evacuation time and any problems encountered and recommendations for improvements.

Hygiene

Employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that the toilet and sinks are cleaned daily and that the rubbish bins are emptied each day and this is recorded on the cleaning schedule form. Employees and volunteers are responsible for maintaining a hygienic working environment for Centre users.

Feminine hygiene provisions are serviced and maintained by an external contractor, site visits are scheduled <1 per month.

Pest management is serviced by WLBC in terms of bait boxes and a compliant fly light. These are serviced and maintained on a 6 weekly basis.

General cleanliness
Employees are responsible for ensuring that floors and work surfaces are cleaned daily and this is noted on the cleaning schedule form. Spillages must be addressed as soon as they are seen/notified. Appropriate signage must be positioned when there is a wet floor/spillage.

Food items and oil-based waste must be disposed of correctly.

Floors, gangways and position of furniture & equipment
Floors, gangways and spaces underneath furniture must be kept clear of trailing cables and other obstructions.

Furniture and equipment must be positioned so that it does not pose a hazard to passers-by and so that wheelchair users are able to have safe access to all equipment and facilities.

The Office, Bar, filing cabinets and cupboard doors should be kept closed (locked where appropriate).

Floor signage must be used when there is a spillage or wet floor surfaces.

Safe Practices
All employees and volunteers should operate within the Centre with due care and attention and conduct themselves with consideration towards other employees, volunteers and Centre users.

Employees should ensure that users behave in a safe manner and, in particular, ensure that vulnerable groups do not cause hazards for themselves or other centre users.

All employees and volunteers should follow good Manual Handling practices and take care to ensure that they do not run the risk of injury as a result of incorrect lifting techniques or a failure to use equipment (trolleys) correctly.

General welfare
The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for implementing and promoting positive measures to enhance the general welfare of the employees, volunteers and centre users. This can include considerations such as: room temperature, ventilation, general noise levels, lighting and provision of suitable (armed) chairs and mobility aids within the Centre.

Smoking
Is not permitted on our premises or in the grounds.

Hazards
Electricity

The main switch board is in the services cupboard in the main Office. This cupboard must be kept closed and locked.

The main switch board for Founders Suite, is positioned within the corridor. This cupboard must be kept closed/bolted.

Employees and volunteers have a duty of care to be aware of and respond with prompt first aid in the event of a person suffering an Electric Shock.

The Safety Officer(s) should ensure that Electric Shock Action notices are in place.

Equipment and Machinery
PAT testing is undertaken on all electrical appliances annually within the centre, this includes the hirer(s) equipment eg. Kitchen equipment, projectors and sewing machines.

The Employee is responsible for ensuring that users know how to use the centre's equipment correctly.

The Employee must check that groups are using the centre's equipment safely and are not causing potential hazards to other users and visitors or to employees and volunteers.

The centre's equipment must be used and serviced or cleaned in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions or centre cleaning schedule.

Dangerous Substances
The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for carrying out a COSHH assessment of all substances in use or stored within the Centre and for ensuring that all employees are fully aware of listed substances.

The Centre does not currently use or store any notifiable Major Hazard substances.

The Safety Officer(s) should maintain effective records relating to the usage, storage, disposal, components, hazards and First Aid measures (including Product Safety Data Sheets where appropriate).

Personal Safety
The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for developing procedures and implementing effective training to ensure the safety of our employees and volunteers while on duty in the Centre.

The Safety Officer(s) are responsible for liaising with the Trust regarding any concerns or matters arising relating to personal safety.

All employees, volunteers and centre users must comply with the safety requirements laid out within this Policy. Any person who intentionally, maliciously or knowingly causes harm to others by breaching the Centre's H&S arrangements/policy safety requirements will be subject to disciplinary action.

If you need any further information, advice or guidance relating to this policy, please contact the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, unless circumstances arise which require the policy to be reviewed earlier.

This policy has been approved for issue by the board of trustees of HBCC.

Policy dated: 01/10/2026

Policy review date: 31/09/2027