

East Leake Parish Council

Health and Safety Policy



Approved by:	Full Council	Date:	19/9/2021	v.2
Last reviewed on:	September 2021			
Next review due by:	September 2024			

1. Aims

East Leake Parish Council aims to:

- › Provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment
- › Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff, councillors and visitors
- › Have robust procedures in place in case of emergencies
- › Ensure that the premises and equipment are maintained safely, and are regularly inspected

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- › The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, which sets out the general duties employers have towards employees and duties relating to lettings
- › The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, which require employers to make an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees
- › The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which require employers to carry out risk assessments, make arrangements to implement necessary measures, and arrange for appropriate information and training
- › The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, which require employers to control substances that are hazardous to health
- › The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013, which state that some accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive and set out the timeframe for this and how long records of such accidents must be kept
- › The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, which require employers to carry out digital screen equipment assessments and states users' entitlement to an eyesight test
- › The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, which require work on gas fittings to be carried out by someone on the Gas Safe Register
- › The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which requires employers to take general fire precautions to ensure the safety of their staff
- › The Work at Height Regulations 2005, which requires employers to protect their staff from falls from height

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The parish clerk has overall responsibility for health and safety matters but may delegate operational matters and day-to-day tasks to the assistant clerk/deputy clerk, as appropriate.

The clerk will take reasonable steps to ensure that employees, councillors and visitors are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.

The clerk will:

- › Assess the risks to staff and others affected by Council activities in order to identify and introduce the health and safety measures necessary to manage those risks
- › Inform employees about risks and the measures in place to manage them
- › Ensure that adequate health and safety training is provided

A named councillor will hold the portfolio for health and safety.

3.1 The Parish Clerk

The clerk is responsible for health and safety day-to-day. This involves:

- › Implementing the health and safety policy
- › Ensuring there is enough staff to operate safely
- › Ensuring that the parish office and buildings are safe and regularly inspected
- › Providing adequate training for staff
- › Reporting to the Council on health and safety matters
- › Ensuring appropriate evacuation procedures are in place
- › Ensuring that in their absence, health and safety responsibilities are delegated to another member of staff
- › Ensuring all risk assessments are completed and reviewed
- › Monitoring cleaning and grounds contracts, and ensuring staff are appropriately trained and have access to personal protective equipment, where necessary

In the clerk's absence, the assistant clerk/deputy clerk will assume the above day-to-day health and safety responsibilities.

3.2 Staff

Council staff have a duty to work safely and will:

- › Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do at work
- › Co-operate with the clerk on health and safety matters
- › Work in accordance with training and instructions
- › Inform the appropriate person of any work situation representing a serious and immediate danger so that remedial action can be taken
- › Model safe and hygienic practice
- › Understand emergency procedures and feel confident in implementing them

3.3 Councillors

Councillors are responsible for following the health and safety advice, on-site and off-site, and for reporting any health and safety incidents to the clerk.

3.4 Contractors

Contractors will agree health and safety practices with the clerk before starting work. Before work begins the contractor will provide evidence that they have completed an adequate risk assessment of all their planned work.

4. Site Security

The parish clerk is responsible for the security of the site in and out of office hours. They are responsible for visual inspections of the site, and for the intruder and fire alarm systems.

The clerk and chairperson are key holders and will respond to an emergency.

5. Fire

Emergency exits, assembly points and assembly point instructions are clearly identified by safety signs and notices. Fire risk assessment of the premises will be reviewed regularly.

The fire alarm is a loud continuous bell. Fire alarm testing will take place once a week. New staff will be trained in fire safety and how to raise the alarm and all staff will be made aware of any new fire risks.

In the event of a fire:

- › The alarm will be raised immediately by whoever discovers the fire and emergency services contacted. Evacuation procedures will also begin immediately
- › Fire extinguishers may be used by staff only, and only then if staff are trained in how to operate them and are confident they can use them without putting themselves or others at risk
- › Staff and others will congregate at the assembly point. The assembly point is the parish council car park at the front of the parish office
- › The clerk will check that everyone is in attendance
- › Staff and others will remain outside the building until the emergency services say it is safe to re-enter

The Council will have special arrangements in place for the evacuation of people with mobility needs and fire risk assessments will also pay particular attention to those with disabilities.

A fire safety checklist can be found in appendix 1.

6. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Councils are required to control the risks from hazardous substances, which can take many forms, including:

- › Chemicals
- › Products containing chemicals
- › Fumes
- › Dusts
- › Vapours
- › Mists
- › Gases and asphyxiating gases
- › Germs that cause diseases, such as leptospirosis or legionnaires disease

Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) risk assessments are completed by the clerk and circulated to all employees who work with hazardous substances. Staff will also be provided with protective equipment, where necessary.

Our staff use and store hazardous products in accordance with instructions on the product label. All hazardous products are kept in their original containers, with clear labelling and product information.

Hazardous substances will be stored in locked areas with only appropriately trained personnel having access to these areas.

Any hazardous products are disposed of in accordance with specific disposal procedures.

Emergency procedures, including procedures for dealing with spillages, are displayed near where hazardous products are stored and in areas where they are routinely used.

7 Gas Safety

- › Installation, maintenance and repair of gas appliances and fittings will be carried out by a competent Gas Safe registered engineer
- › Gas pipework, appliances and flues are regularly maintained
- › All rooms with gas appliances are checked to ensure that they have adequate ventilation

8 Legionella

- › A water risk assessment has been completed by LCS Ltd. This will be reviewed every two years. The clerk is responsible for ensuring that the identified operational controls are conducted and recorded in the Council's water log book
- › This risk assessment will be reviewed every two years and when significant changes have occurred to the water system and/or building footprint
- › The risks from legionella, as identified by the risk assessment, will be mitigated by controls, such as regular flushing, and temperature checks

9 Asbestos

- › Staff are briefed on the hazards of asbestos, the location of any asbestos and the action to take if they suspect they have disturbed it
- › Arrangements are in place to ensure that contractors are made aware of any asbestos on the premises and that it is not disturbed by their work
- › Contractors will be advised that if they discover material which they suspect could be asbestos, they will stop work immediately until the area is declared safe
- › A record will be kept of the location of any asbestos found on the site (see Appendix 2 for template)

10 Equipment

- › All equipment and machinery is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. In addition, maintenance schedules outline when extra checks should take place
- › When new equipment is purchased, it is checked to ensure that it meets appropriate standards

10.1 Electrical Equipment

- › All staff are responsible for ensuring that they use and handle electrical equipment sensibly and safely
- › Any councillor or volunteer who handles electrical appliances does so under the supervision of the member of staff who so directs them
- › Any potential hazards will be reported to the clerk immediately
- › Permanently installed electrical equipment is connected through a dedicated isolator switch and adequately earthed
- › A fixed wire test will be carried out every five years
- › Only trained staff members can check plugs
- › Where necessary a portable appliance test (PAT) will be carried out by a competent person
- › All isolator switches are clearly marked to identify their machine
- › Electrical apparatus and connections will not be touched by wet hands and will only be used in dry conditions
- › Maintenance, repair, installation and disconnection work associated with permanently installed or portable electrical equipment is only carried out by a competent person

10.2 Display Screen Equipment

- › All staff who use computers daily as a significant part of their normal work have a display screen equipment (DSE) assessment carried out. 'Significant' is taken to be continuous/near continuous spells of an hour or more at a time

10.3 Play Equipment

Play equipment and safety surfacing in play areas owned by the Parish Council will be subject to regular inspection, as follows:

- Daily, visual checks by the grounds staff
- Annual inspection by a competent contractor with a written report being presented to councillors

If there are concerns about the condition of any of the equipment or surfacing, this will be reported to the clerk, who will consider whether to close off the area and arrange for repair/maintenance, as necessary.

Councillors will consider the recommendations in the annual inspection report and agree appropriate action to ensure all play equipment and surfacing is maintained in a good, safe condition.

10.4 Noisy Equipment

We will assess and identify measures to reduce risks from exposure to noise so that we can protect the hearing of employees.

Where required, we will ensure that:

- hearing protection is provided and used
- any other controls are properly in place
- we provide information, training and health surveillance

We will review what staff are doing if anything changes that may affect the noise exposures where they work.

10.5 Specialist Equipment

Staff, councillors and visitors are responsible for the maintenance and safety of their own wheelchairs.

Any oxygen cylinders will be stored in a designated space, and staff will be trained in the removal storage and replacement of oxygen cylinders.

11. Lone Working

Lone working may include:

- Late working
- Home or site visits
- Weekend working
- Site grounds duties
- Site cleaning duties
- Working in a single occupancy office

Potentially dangerous activities, such as those where there is a risk of falling from height, will not be undertaken when working alone. If there are any doubts about the task to be performed then the task will be postponed until other staff members are available.

If lone working is to be undertaken, a colleague, friend or family member will be informed about where the member of staff is and when they are likely to return.

The lone worker will ensure that they are medically fit to work alone.

12. Working at Height

We will ensure that work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people with the skills, knowledge and experience to do the work.

In addition:

- › The grounds staff retain ladders for working at height
- › Others are prohibited from using ladders
- › Staff will wear appropriate footwear and clothing when using ladders
- › Contractors are expected to provide their own ladders for working at height
- › Before using a ladder, staff are expected to conduct a visual inspection to ensure its safety
- › Access to high levels, such as roofs, is only permitted by trained persons

13. Manual Handling

It is up to individuals to determine whether they are fit to lift or move equipment and furniture. If an individual feels that to lift an item could result in injury or exacerbate an existing condition, they will ask for assistance.

The clerk will ensure that proper mechanical aids and lifting equipment is available and that staff are trained in how to use them safely.

Staff are expected to use the following basic manual handling procedure:

- › Plan the lift and assess the load. If it is awkward or heavy, use a mechanical aid, such as a trolley, or ask another person to help
- › Take the more direct route that is clear from obstruction and is as flat as possible
- › Ensure the area where you plan to offload the load is clear
- › When lifting, bend your knees and keep your back straight, feet apart and angled out. Ensure the load is held close to the body and firmly. Lift smoothly and slowly and avoid twisting, stretching and reaching where practicable

14. Lettings

This policy applies to lettings. Those who hire any aspect of the site, or any facilities will be made aware of the content of the Council's health and safety policy and will have responsibility for complying with it.

15. Violence at Work

We believe that staff should not be in any danger at work and will not tolerate violent or threatening behaviour towards our staff.

All staff will report any incidents of aggression or violence (or near misses) directed to themselves to their line manager immediately. This applies to violence from councillors, visitors or other staff.

16. Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises.

17. Infection Prevention and Control

We follow national guidance published by Public Health England when responding to infection control issues. We will encourage staff, councillors, visitors and contractors to follow the good hygiene practice, outlined below, where applicable.

17.1 Handwashing

- › Wash hands with liquid soap and warm water, and dry with paper towels
- › Always wash hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food, and after handling animals
- › Cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings

17.2 Coughing and Sneezing

- › Cover mouth and nose with a tissue
- › Wash hands after using or disposing of tissues
- › Spitting is discouraged

17.3 Personal Protective Equipment

- › Wear disposable non-powdered vinyl or latex-free CE-marked gloves and disposable plastic aprons where there is a risk of splashing or contamination with blood/body fluids
- › Wear goggles if there is a risk of splashing to the face
- › Use the correct personal protective equipment when handling cleaning chemicals

17.4 Cleaning of the Environment

- › Clean the environment, including touch points, such as light switches and door handles, frequently and thoroughly

17.5 Cleaning of Blood and Body Fluid Spillages

- › Clean up all spillages of blood, faeces, saliva, vomit, nasal and eye discharges immediately and wear personal protective equipment
- › When spillages occur, clean using a product that combines both a detergent and a disinfectant and use as per manufacturer's instructions. Ensure it is effective against bacteria and viruses and suitable for use on the affected surface
- › Never use mops for cleaning up blood and body fluid spillages – use disposable paper towels and discard clinical waste as described below
- › Make spillage kits available for blood spills

17.6 Clinical Waste

- › Always segregate domestic and clinical waste, in accordance with local policy
- › Used nappies/pads, gloves, aprons and soiled dressings are stored in correct clinical waste bags in foot-operated bins
- › Remove clinical waste with a registered waste contractor

17.7 Those Vulnerable to Infection

Some medical conditions make individuals vulnerable to infections that would rarely be serious in most people. The clerk will normally have been made aware of such vulnerabilities. If exposed to something problematic, the person will be informed promptly and further medical advice sought.

17.8 Exclusion Periods for Infectious Diseases

The Council will follow recommended exclusion periods outlined by Public Health England.

In the event of an epidemic/pandemic, we will follow advice from Public Health England about the appropriate course of action.

18. New and Expectant Mothers

Risk assessments will be carried out whenever any employee notifies the Council that they are pregnant.

Appropriate measures will be put in place to control risks identified. Some specific risks are summarised below:

- › Chickenpox can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. Expectant mothers should report exposure to antenatal carer and GP at any stage of exposure. Shingles is caused by the

same virus as chickenpox, so anyone who has not had chickenpox is potentially vulnerable to the infection if they have close contact with a case of shingles

- If a pregnant woman comes into contact with measles or German measles (rubella), she should inform her antenatal carer and GP immediately to ensure investigation
- Slapped cheek disease (parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child. If exposed early in pregnancy (before 20 weeks), the pregnant woman should inform her antenatal care and GP as this must be investigated promptly

19. Occupational Stress

We are committed to promoting high levels of health and wellbeing and recognise the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors through risk assessment.

Systems are in place within the Council for responding to individual concerns and monitoring staff workloads.

20. Accident Reporting

20.1 Accident Record Book

- A record of any accidents will be made in the accident book as soon as possible after the accident occurs by the member of staff or first aider who deals with it.
- As much detail as possible will be supplied when reporting an accident.
- Records held in the accident book will be retained for a minimum of 3 years, in accordance with regulation 25 of the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979, and then securely disposed of.

20.2 Reporting to the Health and Safety Executive

The clerk will keep a record of any accident which results in a reportable injury, disease, or dangerous occurrence as defined in the RIDDOR 2013 legislation (regulations 4, 5, 6 and 7).

The clerk will report these to the Health and Safety Executive as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any event within 10 days of the incident.

Reportable injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences include:

- Death
- Specified injuries. These are:
 - Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes
 - Amputations
 - Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight
 - Any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs
 - Serious burns (including scalding)
 - Any scalping requiring hospital treatment
 - Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
 - Any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness, or requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- Injuries where an employee is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven consecutive days
- Where an accident leads to someone being taken to hospital
- Where something happens that does not result in an injury, but could have done
- Near-miss events that do not result in an injury but could have done. Examples of near-miss events include, but are not limited to:

- The collapse or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment
- The accidental release of a biological agent likely to cause severe human illness
- The accidental release or escape of any substance that may cause a serious injury or damage to health
- An electrical short circuit or overload causing a fire or explosion

Information on how to make a RIDDOR report is available here:

How to make a RIDDOR report – <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm>

21. Training

Our staff are provided with health and safety training as part of their induction process.

Staff who work in high-risk environments are given additional health and safety training.

22. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed by the parish clerk, the chair of the Council and the councillor who holds the health & safety portfolio every three years.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the full council.

Chairperson's Signature:	
Chairperson's Name:	
Date:	
Review Date:	August 2024

Appendix 1. Fire Safety Checklist

ISSUE TO CHECK	YES/NO
Are fire regulations prominently displayed?	
Is fire-fighting equipment, including fire blankets, in place?	
Does fire-fighting equipment give details for the type of fire it should be used for?	
Are fire exits clearly labelled?	
Do fire doors open and close properly? Are they fitted with self-closing mechanisms?	
Are flammable materials stored away from open flames?	
Do all staff and councillors understand what to do in the event of a fire?	
Can you easily hear the fire alarm from all areas?	
Is there evidence of regular fire alarm testing and fire extinguisher servicing?	

