

SHREWSBURY HOUSE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Bushmoor Crescent, Shooters Hill, London SE18 3EG

Tel: 020 8854 3895

Email: manager@shrewsburyhouse.org

Website: www.shrewsburyhouse.org

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Revised: November 2018

Approved by SHCA Board November 2018

Review Date: November 2021

Charity No. 1011659

Company No. 2695822



1. Introduction

(a) It is the policy of Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA) to comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent legislation, to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all employees and users and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

(b) SHCA recognises and accepts its responsibility to protect the health and safety of all Centre users and visitors to the workplace (including volunteers, contractors, temporary staff and any members of the public) by the upkeep of the fabric of the Centre, its fixtures and fittings. The Centre will also co-operate on health and safety matters with other organisations accommodated within the Centre premises. **However, activities and users within each group operating within the Centre fall under the duty of care of the group's organisers, not the Community Centre itself.**

(c) A copy of this policy will be issued to each member of staff, and to regular groups using the Centre, and the Centre will ensure that any user of the Centre has open access to the policy.

(d) The policy will be kept up to date and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed annually.

2. Responsibilities and Arrangements for Health & Safety Management

(a) Introduction

The lines of responsibility and duty of care within Community Centres can be complex, but it is extremely important that all staff, volunteers, board members, and users of the Centre understand who has the duty of care, responsibility under insurance policies, for First Aid and for ensuring general health and safety equipment, policies, procedures and reporting within the building. The Centre is responsible for checking that the Health and Safety regulations are reflected in its terms of letting and reviewed regularly.

(b) Groups using the Centre Facilities

Everyone within the Centre property is covered by the Centre's Public Liability insurance. Any problem caused by the building or Centre-related equipment will fall under this policy, and is the responsibility of the Centre management.

The Centre has a duty under the Fire and Evacuation Regulations to stay within certain limits of safe attendance within the Centre as a whole. It therefore needs to be informed of the average number of group participants and any special circumstances that might affect these requirements (e.g. a high percentage of wheelchair users or children). These limits are currently:

310 in main building
60 in the Annexe

(c) Any health and safety issues arising within a group using the Centre, e.g. disputes between group users, equipment brought in by groups etc. fall under the responsibility and insurance of the group's management. It is the group's responsibility to ensure that all the safety checks (e.g. electrical testing) are carried out on their own equipment to the same standard advised in the Centre's Health and Safety policy.

(d) The Centre is responsible for ensuring that groups and users have read and understood its Health and Safety Policy (sent out with affiliation papers and hire forms) and have agreed to abide by them, as well as for checking the Group or User's own Health and Safety Policies. Groups must also inform the Centre and show proof of adequate health and safety cover (policies and insurance) for any special requirements of their group, e.g. crèche facilities, special equipment, an increase in group numbers above the agreed capacity etc., at least three weeks before they are brought into the Centre. If any of these fall outside the Centre's current Health and Safety Policy or insurances the Centre manager and Board will decide whether to extend their cover or whether that group or activity is outside their capacity and is not permitted to operate within the Centre. Private and other hirers of the premises can extend their own insurance policies, take out their own policy, or negotiate with the Centre for an extension of its cover where necessary.

Groups must also take specific duty of care for anyone attending their group whilst within the Centre premises by nominating a responsible person in regard to fire safety and first aid. They must inform the Centre manager/reception of the names of this responsible person and must ensure that they have sufficient checks in place to allow an accurate headcount in case of any emergency requiring evacuation of the building.

(e) Private or Commercial Hirers

In the case of private one-off hire of the facilities, a registration system or the presence of a named first-aider may not be practicable, but the responsibility in any emergency remains with the hirer, not the Centre.

(f) Sections and Affiliates

Some groups may be constituted as Sections or Affiliates of the Centre. Please refer to these constitutional documents to ensure that both parties are clear where responsibility for health and safety lies.

(g) Sub-Tenants of Centre Space

If any rooms are leased-out to longer-term tenants the tenant should be held responsible in the Contract for their own organisation's internal Health and Safety policy and practice. These should be of a minimum standard comparable to the Centre's own policy, but taking into account any special requirements of their organisation, e.g. crèche facilities, special equipment etc. As with groups, the Centre has a duty under the Fire and Evacuation Regulations to adhere to limits of safe attendance within the Centre as a whole. The Centre therefore needs to be informed of the average number of group participants and any special circumstances that might affect these requirements (e.g. a high percentage of wheelchair users or children).

3. Health & Safety for Employees

(a) The Board of Trustees

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a statutory duty on all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of all its employees at work and other people who may be affected by their activities,

The Board, as the employer, usually has overall and final responsibility for health and safety matters at the Centre, and for ensuring that health and safety legislation is complied with by its employees, and that sufficient safeguards are put in place so that groups using the Centre understand the health and safety policy of the Centre and are aware of their own health and safety responsibilities towards the users of their groups.

The SHCA Board will review the operation of its Health & Safety Policy in line with its Policy on Policies and Procedures.

(b) The Centre Manager

The Centre manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Health & Safety policy is put into practice within the Centre. In particular the Centre manager will ensure that:

- employees and volunteers receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters
- a risk assessment is undertaken annually and the results written up and made available to all employees
- any accidents or health and safety incidents are recorded, investigated and reported to the Board
- there are arrangements in place to monitor the maintenance of the premises and equipment
- employees and volunteers understand the procedure in place for recording and reporting health and safety incidents and serious health and safety incidents to the Health & Safety Executive
- there are adequate arrangements to liaise and co-operate on health and safety matters with other employers and groups sharing or making use of the Centre premises. Also those groups using the Centre are aware of the overall health and safety policy of the Centre and of their own responsibility towards the users of their groups.

(c) Competent Persons

The Centre manager will appoint at least one "competent person" from amongst the Community Centre employees, as defined in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1993. In the absence of the competent person, another employee will be nominated and all employees will receive sufficient training to enable them to fulfil this role.

Competent persons will report to the Centre manager and will assist in assessing the health and safety risks to the Centre's employees and volunteers and devising and applying measures to improve health and safety. The Centre manager will ensure that the competent person has adequate time, information, training and resources to undertake their task.

All employees will be told who the competent person is. If this employee is absent, a second competent person will be nominated.

(d) All Employees

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

Employees must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with anything provided for their health, safety and welfare. Serious breaches of the Health & Safety Policy and rules (e.g. misusing equipment, deliberately putting someone else's safety in danger) will be dealt with through the Centre's disciplinary procedure.

If an employee or volunteer notices a health or safety problem or concern which they are unable to put right, they must immediately inform the Centre manager, or, the competent person named above

(e) Fire Officers

The Community Centre will appoint a Fire Officer who shall receive appropriate training.

The responsibilities of the Fire Officer will be to:

- Be instructed on potential fire hazards and the use of fire fighting equipment and ensure that regular testing of fire alarms and fire drills are arranged. (Note however that the main priority is to evacuate the building and call the fire service, not to tackle the fire.)
- Ensure Community Centre staff and regular Centre Users are aware of the fire alarm and fire drill
- In the event of an emergency, assist with the efficient evacuation of the Centre's staff, users and visitors. (Note however that responsibility for headcount within any user group lies with that group, not the Centre).
- Liaise with the appointed Fire Officers of each group attending the Centre, the Fire Brigade and the Community Centre manager at the assembly point.

(f) First Aiders

Although there is no requirement for a qualified first aider on the premises, there is an appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements, and all staff and volunteers are encouraged to attend First Aid training.

Staff will ensure that the first aid box is kept in the correct place, contains the items laid down in the Code of Practice and Guidance Notes published by the Health and Safety Executive (and nothing else), and is regularly restocked.

(g) Risk Assessment

The Centre management will ensure that a competent person carries out a risk assessment in accordance with the 1992 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP). This risk assessment will be written up, and be made available to all staff.

The written risk assessment will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure it covers all employees against all risks, and to ensure that any action identified as needed in the risk assessment has been carried out. The risk assessment will also be updated every time that there is a major change in working practices. The risk assessment will cover all Centre employees and volunteers, wherever they may be based, and will cover all aspects of their work, covering the range of activities and needs represented by regular Centre users and private or commercial hirers.

(h) Training

The Centre will ensure that new employees and volunteers receive information on health and safety as part of their induction.

The Centre will organise training for employees and volunteers on health and safety matters as appropriate, including: general health and safety training, first aid, manual handling, fire safety, risk assessment. The Centre will also organise training for appropriate use of equipment, and any special training needed to ensure safe systems of work such as working from heights/ladders

If employees or volunteers consider they have health and safety training needs they should inform the Centre manager.

4. Building Maintenance

(a) The Centre has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff, volunteers, user groups and visitors. The Centre manager will be responsible for ensuring that any repairs are carried out swiftly with the minimum of disruption.

All Community Centre staff and volunteers are responsible for spotting hazards or potential hazards. If a hazard is seen, it should be removed or dealt with as soon as possible, or if not, reported to the Centre manager or competent person immediately.

Any work undertaken that is subject to legislative controls will be carried out by a qualified person (e.g. CORGI). No staff should endanger themselves or others by carrying out such work.

(b) External Contractors

The Centre manager is responsible for checking with external contractors prior to hiring them that they will comply with Health & Safety Regulations. This should be included in any contract. Contractors hired via other bodies must also comply with the Centre's Health & Safety Regulations.

Members of staff are encouraged to report any breach of health and safety by external contractors whilst carrying out repairs or maintenance, and the Centre manager will deal with this promptly. The Centre manager has the discretion to stop any work until the contractor meets health and safety standards. Any person can intervene to stop activities that they perceive may not be safe and should seek help to have their concerns resolved by either the Centre Manager or the Health & Safety Competent person identified by the organisation. (See 3.c. above)

Third party contractors cannot resume work until agreed with the Centre Manager or the Health & Safety Competent person identified by the organisation.

Any work presenting security risks should be assessed and agreed with the Centre manager before the contract is signed, e.g. scaffolding.

(c) Examples of Hazards:

Things out of reach:

Chairs or other furniture must not be used to stand on for the purposes of replacing light bulbs, reaching for things off tops of cupboards etc. A properly maintained, undamaged step ladder must be used.

Damaged Equipment:

Regular checks must be carried out on furniture and equipment for damage which leave sharp edges protruding or other hazards. Any damaged furniture must be reported for repair or condemnation straight away and must be removed from use.

Damage to Fabric of Building, Windows etc.:

All such damage must be reported immediately to the Centre manager or Maintenance Supervisor.

Misplaced Furniture, Equipment or Supplies:

Any furniture, equipment or supplies left in an inappropriate place, for example obstructing a gangway, must be removed immediately, and placed in an appropriate, safe place.

Asbestos

Shrewsbury House was last tested for asbestos in April 2012 and a copy of the report is located in the office. All contractors must sign to say that they have been shown the report and know the location of asbestos in the areas in which they are working.

5. Good Housekeeping

(a) Aisles & Gangways: Gangways must be kept clear from obstructions and materials must be stored in safe areas. Under no circumstances must goods or materials be stacked immediately in front of or obstructing fire doors, fire exits, fire alarms or fire equipment. Buggies are not to be taken upstairs but may be stored in the buggy area in reception.

Persons attending the House must not block the foyer, stairs or any other gangways in order to comply with fire regulations.

(b) Smoking: The Centre is a non-smoking building. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes. A designated outside smoking area is provided .

(c) Overcrowding: The general minimum space per person, recommended by the 1992 Regulations is 11 cubic metres. The Centre will where practicable avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions for its own staff, and will consult staff on any changes in office layout.

(d) Ventilation: The Community Centre will endeavour to provide a well ventilated workplace in which staff have control over their local level of ventilation.

(e) Temperature: In office workplaces a minimum temperature of 16°C must be maintained, Efforts will be made so far as is reasonably practical to ensure the workplace temperature does not rise to an uncomfortable level. The Centre will do all in its power to ensure reasonable temperatures in the workplace at all times.

(f) Lighting: Adequate lighting must be provided. If lights are found to be out of order, the fault must be corrected as soon as reasonably possible.

(g) Noise: The Centre will endeavour to ensure that noise is kept to as low a level as is practicable, but it also accepts that some groups using the Centre may have activities which generate considerable noise. It therefore encourages any staff or other users to report any problems with noise disrupting their work or causing distress, and will seek within reason to find an acceptable solution, e.g. by moving workstations or changing the timing or location of regular group booking slots.

(h) Office Atmospheric Pollutants: Office equipment such as photocopiers and printers, and some activities within the Centre, e.g. art and crafts materials, can emit pollutants into the atmosphere. The Community Centre will take reasonable precautions in ensuring that these levels are kept as low as is possible. Employees will not be expected to work in enclosed spaces with equipment that emits atmospheric pollutants. Spaces where these pollutants are present shall be kept well ventilated.

(i) Equipment Storage and Usage: No wires must be left trailing across floors. Non flammable rubbish bins must be positioned at various points. Except in emergencies, and only with the permission of the Centre manager, candles, paraffin, bar electric or calor gas fires may not be used at the Community Centre premises. All potentially dangerous tools or equipment must be kept safely in a locked cupboard when not in use.

(j) Electrical Equipment: The Centre manager should hold copies of manufacturers' detailed instructions on the maintenance of machinery, and will ensure that maintenance contracts are adhered to and, where appropriate, renewed.

Broken, ineffective or damaged electrical equipment must be reported to the Centre manager.

Staff should never perform unsafe practices such as using inappropriate tools to fix equipment, opening the workings or trying to fix electrical equipment they are not responsible for (e.g. leased photocopiers, telephone equipment,) running too many appliances from a single plug or more than one multi-plug board from any socket, putting nails in walls where there may be hidden cables. **Loose cables must not be left unattended (e.g. vacuum cleaner).**

The Centre manager is responsible for arranging electrical testing on all electrical equipment by a qualified electrician on an annual basis, and all tested items should be tagged with the date of passing the test and date for the next test.

No second-hand electrical equipment will be used until tested by an electrician as above.

Groups and hirers of the premises may not bring their own electrical equipment onto the premises unless previously agreed and the equipment carries a current PAT testing certificate.

6. Welfare Arrangements

(a) Toilets and Washing Facilities: The Centre will seek to ensure that suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities are provided for all staff in accordance with the minimum requirements of Health & Safety legislation.

- Each toilet will be in a separate, lockable room. Washing facilities will include a supply of clean hot and cold water, soap and suitable means of drying (e.g. paper towels or auto-dryers)
- Vending machines for sanitary products and disposal bins should be provided where practicable. Bins should be emptied and sanitised regularly.
- Accessible toilets will be kept free of obstructions and will not be used to store other equipment.
- Breastfeeding and baby changing facilities will be provided where practicable.

(b) Kitchens: If catering facilities are provided for the public, cookers and fridges in regular use must be kept clean on a weekly basis. Kitchens must be cleaned daily.

All catering facilities are subject to Environmental Health inspections. Food Hygiene Certificates and guidance must be clearly displayed.

(c) Drinking Water: An adequate supply of drinking water will be provided for all employees and other people on the premises.

(d) Special Circumstances: Any employee or volunteer who is pregnant or breast-feeding should inform the Centre manager (Confidentiality policy applies) in order to receive legal protection in terms of health and safety. When informed of the pregnancy, a risk assessment will be carried out on the individual's area of work by the Centre manager and the employee. The Centre will assess risks to health and safety of pregnant or breastfeeding employees and their children, including unborn children. Employees should be offered temporary variations to working hours, duties and conditions if there are risks. If no suitable working arrangements are available, the employee will be suspended on full pay while the risk remains.

Likewise, employees must inform their employer of any health conditions which might affect their health and safety at work to receive legal protection, particularly if these include risks in operating machinery or driving.

If there are health and safety risks which mean that it would not be safe for the employee to continue their normal job, the Centre must offer a suitable alternative or suspend the employee on full pay until the risk is removed.

(e) Hours of Work: Centre employees and volunteers should not work excessively long hours, and should take adequate breaks for meals and rest.

7. Personal Safety

(a) Office Security: Staff and volunteers need to be aware of security issues in venues where there is a regular flow of users in and out of the building or where they may be alone in the building. Where staff are dealing with an individual but feel uneasy about being alone with them, or at any time when feel that they might be vulnerable or at risk, they should immediately speak to the Centre manager.

All windows and entry doors will be lockable.

(b) Prevention whilst away from normal workplace on Community Centre business: Staff who are out of the office but on Centre business should make it clear to other staff where they will be, how long for and how they can be contacted. If in the course of a trip away from the office plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office.

Whenever possible meeting alone with someone in a place without other people should be avoided.

(c) Prevention whilst holding or carrying money or valuables for the Centre: Staff or volunteers who carry money for the Centre have the right to be accompanied by another person, and any visits to the bank should not be at a regular time.

Large amounts of cash, over and above petty cash, should not be kept in Centre premises.

Under no circumstances should staff put themselves at risk on account of the Community Centre's property. If money or equipment is demanded with threats it should be handed over.

(d) Visual Display Equipment & IT: It is the policy of SHCA to comply with the law as set out in the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

(e) Equipment: The Centre will conduct health and safety assessments of all workstations of employees who use VDU screens as a substantial and regular part of their usual work. Screens should be at eye-height and suitable adjustable chairs should be made available. If requested and dependent on resources available, items such as anti glare screens and wrist and foot rests will be provided.

(f) Breaks: Staff will take regular breaks (at least 10 minutes away for every hour at the screen). Short frequent breaks are recommended more than occasional longer breaks.

(g) Eyesight problems: For those employees who use computers on a regular basis, SHCA will pay for an eye test and up to £50 towards the cost of glasses.

(h) WRULDS/RSI: Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (also known as Repetitive Strain Injuries) are often associated with keyboard work. The Centre will provide suitable seating and equipment with the aim of avoiding such problems, but staff and volunteers should contribute to their own safety and welfare by:

- avoiding sitting in the same position for long periods
- adjusting equipment and furniture to appropriate/comfortable positions (e.g. the top of your computer screen should be level with your eyeline)
- taking a rest break from VDU work (at least 10 minutes away every hour) by doing some other work.

8. Fire Safety

(a) General: It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of fire hazards, to know the location of fire exits and the assembly point. Everyone must know the fire drill instructions, and these will be part of the induction process for all new staff and volunteers.

Access to escape doors, extinguishers and other fire fighting equipment must not be obstructed and all Fire Officers will be instructed on their use.

Fire extinguishers must be serviced annually. Kitchens must contain a fire blanket. All premises must display fire evacuation procedures clearly.

(b) Fire Drills & Testing: The Centre will arrange at least three Fire Drills each year. The Centre's manager and Fire Officer are responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of the evacuation procedures. The Fire Officer has the power to remove obstructions from fire exits. The Fire Officer and manager must meet after each evacuation to review the evacuation and to make recommendations for improved practices.

The fire alarms shall be tested at regular intervals. Centre staff, user groups and visitors will be notified of any testing taking place during office hours.

Visitors to the Centre and all Centre staff, including volunteers, must be made fully familiar with the escape routes and assembly points.

(c) FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE

If the fire Alarm sounds (a continuous single pitch note)

- Evacuate the building immediately by the nearest exit.
- Ensure any visitors leave the building.
- Do not put yourself at risk.
- Assemble outside the main front gates in Bushmoor Crescent
- Do not re-enter the building for any reason until the Centre manager or fire brigade confirm that it is safe to so.

If You Discover A Fire

- Raise the alarm by operating the break glass switch at the nearest Fire Alarm call Point. These are located in the stairwells on each floor.
- Evacuate the building immediately as above.

9. First Aid and Accident Reporting

(a) First Aid: First Aid provision will be available at all times in an appropriate and accessible First Aid Box.

The First Aid boxes are kept at Reception and in the kitchen. There are also two eyewash stations, located in the freezer room and kitchen.

All new employees or volunteers will be told as part of their induction of the location of first aid equipment and which other staff have received first aid training.

The names of any named First Aiders will be clearly on public display

A record of all First Aid cases treated will be kept in the Accident Book, which is located at the Reception desk.

The principal action if a member of the public needs First Aid is to call an ambulance (Dial 999).

(b) Accidents and Emergencies: All employees must report all incidents which result or nearly result in personal injury to themselves or others, to the Centre manager and ensure the accident is recorded in the Accident Book.

It is the responsibility of the Centre manager to ensure that any necessary follow up action is taken to reduce the risk of the accident or near accident recurring.

The Centre manager is responsible for reporting incidents which come within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), to the Royal Borough of Greenwich Environmental Health Department. RIDDOR covers the following incidents:

- (a) fatal accidents
- (b) major injury accidents\conditions
- (c) dangerous occurrences
- (d) accidents causing more than three days incapacity for work
- (e) certain work-related diseases.

(c) COSHH.General Statement: Under the 1992 COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations employers have a duty to make an assessment of the risks related to hazardous substances e.g. chemicals, noxious fumes etc. In accordance with the Approved Code of Practice this assessment will be carried out and written down by a nominated competent person.

Following this assessment, in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) SHCA will:

- (a) In the first instance take action to **remove** any hazardous substances.
- (b) If this is not possible then action shall be taken to find a **substitute** for the hazardous substance.
- (c) If this is not possible such substances shall be **enclosed** within a safe environment.
- (d) If none of the above is possible **protective equipment** will be issued to ensure the safety of staff.

(d) Monitoring: If for any reason a member of staff has to be exposed to a possibly hazardous substance, levels of exposure will be monitored.

At all times levels of ill-health related to exposure to hazardous substances at work will be monitored.

(e) Removal, Substitution, Enclosure and Protection: All members of staff shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available they should be used (e.g. water based markers, correction fluid etc). If there is no way of avoiding use of a hazardous substance, then staff must use the substance in a secure, ventilated environment away from other workers, and use proper protective equipment, which shall be made available by the Community Centre.

(f) Manual Handling: Centre employees should avoid heavy manual lifting where at all possible. However, employees may be required to manually lift and handle loads. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.

Occurrences of manual handling for Centre employees are likely to include:

- moving Centre furniture and equipment, including between floors
- receipt and storage of stationery orders and bar stocks
- handling loads at events organised by the Community Centre.

All employees should use aids which are available to reduce the risk of injury, e.g. a stack trolley.

Employees should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other employees should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting in a team take instructions from one person only.

Any employee feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in the Accident Book. To continue may result in more serious injury.

10. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- SCHA Whistleblowing Policy
- SHCA Safeguarding Policy for Children & Vulnerable Adults