

Rackheath Community Council

Health and Safety Policy



Adopted at the Community Council meeting of 15 June 2015

Reviewed November 2021

Reviewed September 2025

Policy

It is the policy of the Community Council to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety at work of all employees and any other person affected by our work.

The full Health and Safety Policy provides details of the responsibilities for different aspects of health and safety implementation and should be read in conjunction with the Risk Assessment associated with the Pavilion building.

In addition, a signed copy of this policy document is provided to each Community Councillor and is held on file by the Community Clerk for reference at any time. It will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

All employees are expected to promote and comply with safe working practices within the Community Council's Health and Safety Policy. Each individual has a responsibility to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. All staff must co-operate with the Community Council to enable them to carry out their statutory duties.

Security of Office/Meeting Room

Valuables - Employees are warned never to leave personal items of value and money unattended as the Community Council cannot accept responsibility for personal losses.

In periods of absence and/or at the end of the day, the premises should be securely locked. The person responsible for locking up should, as a matter of routine, check all the following: -

- all office equipment is turned off
- all windows are closed and securely locked
- filing and archive areas are locked and secure
- all lights are turned off
- all entrances and exits to the building are firmly shut and securely locked.

Any unusual circumstances whatsoever in relation to persons or property should be reported to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

Accidents and First Aid

An accident or injury at work, however trivial it may appear at the time must be reported to the Health and Safety Manager (in this case the Chairman of the Community Council). Details of the accident should be recorded in an Accident Book held by the Clerk.

In the event of an accident which requires First Aid treatment, assistance should be available from an appointed First Aider (where applicable). If it is necessary to call an ambulance, dial 999 for the emergency services. On no account should you move anyone who appears to be seriously injured unless it is essential to do so for reasons of personal safety.

Fire Precautions

All employees must be familiar with the procedure and nearest fire extinguishers and how to raise the alarm. In addition, it is important to keep any fire doors closed to ensure that all corridors and fire exits are kept free from obstruction at all times when using public buildings. Please refer to the Fire Evacuation Plan.

Substance Hazardous to Health

There is legislation covering the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). This requires that all substances used in the workplace must be assessed in order to identify the risk to health. Fortunately, in an office environment there are relatively few substances that might be hazardous to health but there are some such as photocopier toner, typing correction fluids and kitchen cleaning materials. Where appropriate these should be stored separately and safely. If you are in any doubt please contact the Assistant Clerk who will hold and maintain a COSHH Register.

Slips Trips and Falls

Falling over as the result of a slip, trip or stumble is the biggest cause of injury at work. Look out for, and report, hazardous situations which may contribute. Wear suitable footwear at work avoiding high heels and slippery soles. Avoid carrying bulky loads where you cannot see properly.

- Mop up any spills and clear away obstructions in your work area.
- Use only a proper step stool or ladder for reaching high items.

Please see the Snow and Ice Plan for details of treating external surfaces when conditions require.

Lifting, Carrying and Handling

A major cause of injury, not just to backs, but to shoulders, arms and even fingers and toes. Information on how to lift is available to each staff member. It is important to seek help if you feel that any item is too heavy to lift. Remember never to arch or twist when reaching for anything in the workplace.

Electrical Equipment

All electrical systems are maintained to prevent danger. Electrical inspections at the office are carried out and checked to comply with National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors (NICEIC) standards.

Safety procedure for lone working

Lone members of staff should not arrange to meet unknown contacts except in public places. All members of staff should provide details to another person of where they are going, the purpose of the visit and their anticipated time of return. If there is any unexpected change to this, please telephone them if possible. All visitors to the Community Office who wish to meet with the Clerk/ Assistant Clerk should be by appointment only.

Please see Lone Worker Policy for more details.

Behaviour towards Staff and Members

The Council expects its staff and members to always be treated courteously and with respect for the work they are doing. They should not be subject to abusive behaviour in any form, which includes:

- rude, disrespectful and offensive behaviour, including derogatory remarks and disruptive acts amounting to verbal and emotional abuse,
- sexually inappropriate comments and behaviour

- racist and discriminatory abuse
- threats of physical violence
- aggressive and violent behaviour

Rackheath Community Council will not tolerate abusive behaviour towards staff or its members and incidents will be raised with the Chair in the first instance and passed to the Police if deemed necessary.

Display Screen Equipment

Display screen users should comply with the Schedule to the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 and complete the Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist.

If you do experience difficulty with the environment in which you are working it is important to report this to the Community Clerk or Chairman who will take all necessary steps to try to have the difficulty resolved.